

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

#### News



School Choice pg. 3 Flex Schedule pg. 5 One to One pg. 7 Decline of Bees pg. 9

#### **Features**



Morse Profile pg. 11 Smart Speakers pg.13 Child Development pg. 15 Only Child pg. 16 Couponing pg. 17 Doris Demers pg. 19

#### Sports & Culture



Football pg. 21 Country Music pg. 23 Junction pg. 25 Boys Volleyball pg. 27

#### Op-Ed



Me too pg. 29
Living it out pg. 31
Public Internet pg. 33
AP Language pg. 35
Follies pg. 37

Dear Readers,

We want to thank you for picking up a copy of *Mouth of the River*'s third issue. This issue was especially challenging due to the number of snow days, our staff trip to New York City, and a hint of senioritis beginning to kick in.

Despite these challenges, we feel that we have created a publication full of meaningful content. In addition to our print stories, we've been working hard to cover as much going on in the community that we can. Our ongoing goal for this year has been to be regarded as the main news source for the Oyster River community.

As reporters, we are instantly informed of news happening around us. It is our job to then inform the public of these events and stories. From Jess Speechley's article about a local student band, Junction, to Nicholas Dundorf's opinion editorial on municipal broadband, we strive to cover a wide variety of topics to appeal to all audiences.

As student journalists, we value the ability to use our voice to inspire change. This quarter, this is especially true. Our staff mourns the loss of the 17 people from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. We admire the courage of the surviving students and the impact they have already made, using their voices to make a difference.

With spring comes new beginnings and opportunities. In the spirit of spring, we hope our magazine and the stories we discuss inspire you to embrace change. Please enjoy Issue 3 of *Mouth of the River*.

Sincerely,

Anna Kate Munsey, Skylar Hamilton, and Zach Leichtman Co-Editors in Chief

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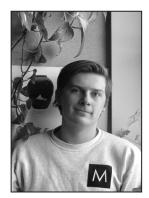
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# SCHOOL CHOICE

With \$4 million at stake, Senate Bill 193, or SB193, has New Hampshire lawmakers and public school officials, including those of the Oyster River Cooperative School District (ORCSD), sparring for opposite outcomes.

SB193, often dubbed the "voucher bill," proposes the "establishment of education freedom savings accounts for students between 5 and 20 years of age." As put by U.S. News in Holly Ramer's article, "House Education Committee Recommends School Choice Bill," it "provides parents with the state's basic per-pupil grant of roughly \$3,000 to be used for private school tuition or home schooling." In a simpler sense, it gives families the option to use the state funds set aside for public schooling of their children towards tuition of private or home schooling.

In order for a family to receive this benefit, the parent or guardian of the child must apply for a scholarship fund. The fund would acknowledge the receipt, and, if they met all the criteria, they would be granted the usage of their "education freedom savings account."

A partisan bill, SB193 first passed the Senate in March of 2017, and just recently passed the House Education Committee

10-9 in January. All but one Republican voted in support of the bill, and all but one Democrat voted against it. Governor Chris Sununu supports the bill, along with Chairman of

# "[It would be] absolutely detrimental to public education."

the Education Committee, Rick Land, and President of the NH Senate, Chuck Morse.

Supporters believe that the bill will provide families the opportunity to choose non-public school options by helping to bear the burden of daunting tuition costs.

"This is one of the best bills we could pass," said Sununu, during an interview with Laura Knoy on the New Hampshire Public Radio's The Exchange, a statewide call-in program. "We have one of the best public education systems in the country, but there's no denying that it doesn't fit for everyone. [SB193] is about opening doors and providing opportunities that otherwise weren't there for a select few individuals and families."

Despite support from NH officials, SB193 has many opponents, who argue that supporters are ignoring the loss that public schools will suffer.

During the Oyster River Cooperative School District (ORCSD) school board meeting, held on Wednesday, January 3rd, board member Brian Cisneros brought up the topic of





SB193 passing the House Education Committee. He asked the rest of the members whether they had any thoughts on its potential effects on the ORCSD. Superintendent Dr. James Morse responded that its impact on OR is unknown, but it will definitely have a significant impact across the state. The bill, as described by Morse, is, "legislation that proposes to divert public funds to private use." He shared his own opinion, adding that SB193 would be "absolutely detrimental to public education."

In a personal interview with Morse, he expanded on this statement. "I can say that my personal opinion is shared by the New Hampshire School Superintendents Association (NHSSA)," he said. "We see [the bill] as a deliberate attempt to divert public money to private use."

It is this diversion of funds which leaves opponents worried. As Morse puts it, "the problem is that the state does not provide anywhere near what it should to public education. The idea is that somehow the public schools could absorb that loss."

So what exactly would this "loss" be? The question remains of the overall cost of SB193. Morse estimates that the bill will cost the state a minimum of \$4 million. This figure has raised

> some eyebrows, but legislators in favor of the bill counter that the the public school systems will not face any losses. Instead, they argue, the \$4 million will be added on to the amount that

the state currently spends on education. Sununu argued that public schools may even gain money with the institution of the bill, due to the fact that the local funds are not being affected, only the state-issued funds are. "Here's the reality of what we're doing here," he said. "Let's say there are ten students in a classroom, and one <code>[takes</code> advantage of the bill."]. That's approximately \$3,000 that comes out of the classroom, but there is still about \$7,000 that stays — for a student that isn't even there! The dollars per student in that classroom actually goes up."

Opponents remain dubious, countering that the bill states nothing along these lines. With no mention of "additional funding for education" in the official records, lawmakers would have no legal responsibility to adhere to their current assurance.

"It would come from taxes, diverting public funds to private use," said Morse. "And that's where the objection is." He continued, skeptical of the claim that the money would not be coming out of public school funds. "The bill has some tremendous holes in it... the response from the sponsors is that it will be





[clarified] in rule-making." However, he added, "the people who create the rules can only make rules related to the overall intent of the law. If the law does not directly address something, then the rulemakers can't do that either. It seems to me that they are avoiding the issue."

So, will SB193 have any effect on ORCSD? Ultimately, it is unlikely that the bill will have a negative impact on the ORCSD budget. Due to the fact that Oyster River is ranked among the top public schools in New Hampshire, there is not a high percentage of students who seek alternative options for high school. In addition, there are even students from other towns actively paying tuition to attend ORHS.

In the 2016-2017 school year, the New Hampshire Department of Education budgeted out \$3 billion for educational purposes, averaging an allotted \$16,000 per pupil. This money comes from local taxation, tuition, food and other local revenue, equitable education aid, and other state and federal sources. However, not every district in the state of New Hampshire has the same education funds; they are determined by local taxation and community votes on the school district's budget. Oyster

River sits slightly above the average per-pupil expenditures, at \$17,000. Other areas, such as the northern town of Landaff, has an allotted sum of just \$9,000 per pupil.

Also in ORHS' favor is the fact that, as of right now, SB193 requires all applicant families

to be within 300% of the federal poverty limit. According to HealthCare.gov, the poverty limit for a family of four is currently an annual income of \$24,600. For districts with a greater impoverished community, as well as a higher population, SB193 could have drastic effects on the public school system.

Spaulding High School principal, Pamela Martin, opposes SB193. Spaulding is a public high school located in Rochester, NH. With 1,505 students currently enrolled, they have almost double the enrollment of ORHS. However, as an area with lower income taxes and average family income, their funds-per-pupil level suffers. "Rochester is a tax cap community that already struggles with funding education," said Martin. "It is likely that a voucher system will put a significant strain on the school district."

New Hampshire legislator Wayne Burton agreed whole-heartedly with both Morse and Martin. "I have actively opposed SB193," stated Burton. "It uses scarce public funds, needed by our school systems, to pay for private schools including religious institutions. This goes against the constitutional prohibition





against favoring any religion."

This raises the often-touchy subject of religion and public funding. The Establishment Clause of the 1st Amendment of the U.S. Constitution states that, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." This clause applies to taxpayer-funded public schools. So what now, when taxpayer funds are being used towards students' tuition at religiously affiliated private schools? Burton expanded on this, saying, "in bypassing the prohibition on using public funds on religious schools, it creates a separate organization through which the money can be channeled." To put it bluntly, he added, "This is a scam."

With continued disputes between parties regarding the ethics of SB193, it remains up in the air as to whether the bill will be passed.

In order for the bill to be put into effect, it still has a couple of legislative steps to go through. As of February, it has passed both the Senate and the House. The next step is for the House and the Senate to collaborate in forming a committee of reconciliation, which will re-work the bill to be identical between

the two branches. Finally, the modified bill must pass a final majority vote in both the House and the Senate. Although it may seem as though the obstacles are many, with Republican majorities in both the House and the Senate SB193 retains

• • • • • • • • • a strong chance of moving

forward

"This is one of the best bills

we could pass."

Minority leaders are working to increase awareness and sway moderate Republicans against the bill. "It certainly is a hot topic in Concord," said Morse.

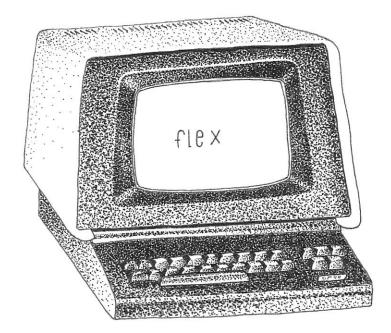
Sununu remained steadfast regarding his stance on the bill, posing several key questions to opponents and skeptics. "[SB193] gets down to the crux of what I believe government needs to be about: the individual. Are we going to be a government that just throws money at systems, and creates new programs, and claims victory with a headline? Or are we going to go to families, and go to students, and say, 'what do you need? What opportunity can I provide you as an individual?""

As a final note, Burton concluded, "I absolutely support families who find private schools better for their children. That is their choice, but the public schools losing those students should not have to suffer for it." M





- Eleanor Zwart



It has been a year full of change at Oyster River, first with a new start time and now with an entirely new schedule to be debuted within the approaching school year. Alongside this scheduling shift also comes a new plan for the high school's current advisory and office hours times: a FLEX block.

The block, scheduled to be 50 minutes long, will occur daily throughout the 2018-2019 school year, which is a feature made possible by the school's unique scheduling plan. This plan is centered around a rotating schedule of three days, where two closely mirror the current block system at ORHS, with seven periods split between the two consecutive days. The other day follows the current system of having each class every day, with the exception of E period. As seen in the visual to the right, these three days each have specific names and features, making for more consistency than in previous years.

ORHS administration and teachers alike hope that a change such as FLEX will help increase productivity within this new schedule, while also helping students make the most out of New Hampshire's mandatory policy for structured free time outside of class.

This productivity is hoped to be achieved by the block's placement, which falls early in the school day. The timing change will also make it impossible for students to leave the building, as can occur within the current office hours system, while simultaneously giving students more of a break between periods.

Hannah Jane Wilson ('18), the high school's current School Board Representative, spoke about the current schedule struggles and misuses of advisory and office hours time, noting, "I think there are a lot of problems with the system now. On block days, there's no break between the first two periods, three if you have second lunch, which is exhausting. Furthermore, even if you need extra help from a teacher or have homework to do, no student wants to sit through office hours on a Friday afternoon, which creates a lot of chaos in the [front] office and advisories."

Wilson's points were reiterated by ORHS senate member, Jackson Deeley ('20), who feels as though, "this year's

schedule is a mess because it lacks basic consistency. I don't use office hours often because it's at the end of the day, and I'm usually pretty burnt out by then. Honestly, I usually just spend the time on my phone waiting for the end of the day so I can go home and be more productive."

Teachers also shared some of these sentiments regarding the current use of advisory and office hours. "Office hours is meant to serve as a time to relearn material, and it becomes completely ineffective when people choose to leave," said Katie Johnson, a math teacher and member of the Advisory and FLEX committee at ORHS.

Another committee member, Andrea Drake, felt similarly, but is hopeful that next year's plan will bring some resolution. "[Teachers] will be able to be more proactive. If we see that students are struggling, there's now a block in the day reserved for helping us get those kids the extra help they need."

Drake's statement closely mirrors the current plans for FLEX time, which entail an advisory-wide planning session on Mondays to personalize each student's week, such as meeting with teachers, making-up tests, or even signing up for fun activities. According to the FLEX committee members, the ensuing four days would be unique to every student, as they would be following their pre-selected, weekly outlines.

However, while advisory groups will still meet on Mondays to discuss and plan for the week, it is yet to be figured out what exactly will happen to the concepts behind advisory in the future. As of right now, FLEX time leans away from the current system, in favor of giving students more freedom in accessing other teachers, classes, and activities.

"However, in order for this <code>[time]</code> to become a reality, we needed to first discuss the how," said ORHS Principal Suzanne Filippone. "We will have over 800 students and 100 staff members in the building next year, so we needed to figure out a way to manage that and keep track of who goes where," she added.

In an attempt to solve these issues, Filippone suggested that funds should be alloted for a FLEX management computer program within next year's school budget. She explained, "we want [FLEX] time to be effective. We don't just want everybody to be leaving school. What we need is good,

quality time for kids to get the help they need while they're still in the building."

In order to achieve this "quality time," it was decided by the Scheduling and FLEX planning committees that a program called Enriching Students would be the best fit for the school, due to the fact that the computerized program allows for both students and teachers to request FLEX times. This means the weekly planning will be two-sided in order to accommodate everyone while also allowing the computerized system keep track of how many students signed up to go to different classes, ensuring even distribution for more one-on-one help opportunities.

"FLEX time will mean that we can physically schedule [students] to come in and get extra practice, whereas before, we really were only going by verbal communication and paper office

hours passes," said Drake. "We can now keep all our information in one place, while also allowing [teachers] to give students the best possible chances at success."

While providing opportunities such as this is only one of the system's benefits, FLEX still remains a concept of the future. For the time being, the school hopes to roll out the Enriching Students program during fourth quarter, in order to work out any major kinks before next year. However, as with anything new, a flexible mind will be required. "I feel like next year will be somewhat of a trial as well, with picking and choosing at what works and then improving it semester to semester," concluded Wilson. "It's going to take a lot of cooperation from administration, faculty, and students, but I really hope the system will work better next year." M

#### Next Year's Schedule

# of Minutes	Period	Start Time	End Time
50	A	8:15 AM	9:05 AM
5		9:05 AM	9:10 AM
50	В	9:10 AM	10:00 AM
5		10:00 AM	10:05 AM
50	FLEX/Advisory	10:05 AM	10:55 AM
5		10:55 AM	11:00 AM
50	С	11:00 AM	11:50 AM
5		11:50 AM	11:55 AM
50	D/	11:55 AM	12:45 PM
30	Lunch	12:45 PM	1:15 PM
5		1:15 PM	1:20 PM
50	F	1:20 PM	2:10 PM
5		2:10 PM	2:15 PM
50	G	2:15 PM	3:05 PM



## **Bobcat Day**

85	A	8:15 AM	9:40 AM
5		9:40 AM	9:45 AM
50	FLEX/Advisory	9:45 AM	10:35 AM
5		10:35 AM	10:40 AM
80	C	10:40 AM	12:00 PM
5		12:00 PM	12:05 PM
60	E	12:05 PM	1:10 PM
30	Lunch	1:10 PM	1:40 PM
5		1:40 PM	1:45 PM
80	F	1:45 PM	3:05 PM

85	В	8:15 AM	9:40 AM
5		9:40 AM	9:45 AM
50	FLEX/Advisory	9:45 AM	10: <b>3</b> 5 AM
5		10:35 AM	10:40 AM
80	D	10:40 AM	12:00 PM
5		12:00 PM	12:05 PM
60	E	12:05 PM	1:10 PM
30	Lunch	1:10 PM	1:40 PM
5		1:40 PM	1:45 PM
80	G	1:45 PM	3:05 PM

- Devan McClain Artwork by Liev Manck

## ONE-TO-ONE?

"It's not about the tool. It's about how I use it in the classroom to benefit learning. That's the big part of the professional development that has to happen," says Celeste Best, Oyster River High School teacher and technology advocate.

Conversations about Oyster River High School becoming a 1-to-1 technology school have been circulating for a while, and the idea has recently gained greater support. A Building Technology Committee of ORHS staff has been formed, and with the end of the ORCSD 5 Year Strategic plan coming up, many are wondering if 1-to-1 technology will be a part of the new plan. 1-to-1 technology essentially means that each student in a school is issued an electronic device, whether it be a tablet or laptop. These devices are utilized in the classrooms and contain a plethora of resources, such as online textbooks, Google Classroom, and note-taking and word-processing applications.

Last year's NEASC surveys found that there was a desire for more technology to be integrated into the ORHS curriculum. This year, a Building Technology Committee of teachers and administrators has come together. Best is a member of this committee and longtime supporter of technology in high schools. She brought up where her interest in technology in schools began, stating, "it was about 2008 or so, we didn't have a lot of technology in the building. We didn't have mobile carts or anything like that and I got to go to a national [technology] conference, that talks about education and best practice of technology and I saw some amazing things, and was like, we need this. And so I actually started writing grants to bring in a lot of technology into the building. What I saw from the students, with their engagement and their understanding of content was so different than without the technology. The 1-to-1, it's just so much easier when everybody has their own."

Best said the idea for 1-to-1 was first brought up several years ago, when Dr. James Morse started as Superintendent of Schools for the ORCSD. Best noted that Morse came from the Maine school system, where 1-to-1 has been the norm for the past fifteen or so years. The idea didn't gain much support at ORHS, so it fizzled out. However, the idea has recently been revitalized, with Morse still in support, and teachers, faculty, and school board members open to the idea.

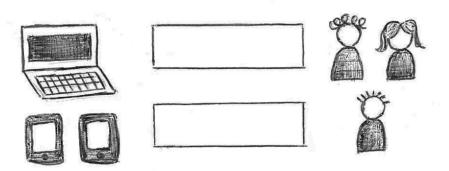
She continued on to explain the next steps in the process of becoming 1-to-1. She explained that the plan must be approved by the school board before anything can really be done. In March, she and Morse plan on presenting data to ORHS faculty to get some preliminary feedback, and hopefully begin the process.

One local high school that has adopted 1-to-1 technology is Bedford High School. BHS started using 1-to-1 in 2014, when this year's seniors were freshmen. While there are several different setups for 1-to-1, at Bedford, each student is required to purchase the same Chromebook laptop. If families can't afford this, or students already have a laptop and don't want to buy another one, they must check a Chromebook out from the school library each morning to use for the school day. Teachers utilize Google Classroom to assign and collect assignments. Melanie Groff, a senior at BHS, said, "this is probably the best aspect about Chromebooks because it is easy to carry around a single laptop, [as] opposed to a bunch of papers or textbooks. You also are able to see the work they do in class if you are absent." Groff noted that many popular websites such as Face-Twitter were blocked on the school netbook and work, prevent students from using

Overall, Groff thinks that BHS becoming 1-to-1 has been a positive thing, however she mentioned several issues that still needed to be worked out. She discussed one problem in particular, saying, "the use of 1-1 is making teaching somewhat obsolete. Since teachers are instead posting lessons on Google Classroom, I could stay home on my computer and get the same experience I would in class, which in return can defeat the purpose of going to school. Although it very much depends on the teacher because some go above and beyond Google Classroom." She closed with, "overall I feel as if it's a good thing to have, although I still believe some of it is in the works."

Heather Wardwell has been a teacher at BHS for the past two years. She said, "I know they want to be an efficient school and value global learning; having access to learning with technology is important for an IB [International Baccalaureate] school. Many kids take an online class or a hybrid class and teachers are expected to have websites and use Google Classroom."

Wardwell agreed with Groff that while there are some issues, 1-to-1 has overall been a good thing for BHS. She said, "teachers work hard to keep our lessons very interactive so students stay on task. It's not ever 100% perfect, but it's pretty good. The students understand the expectations and know that teachers have ways of checking on their focus. All classes are block classes and the computer helps to vary the activities throughout the peri-



"I think that technology is wonderful; it's a great tool, but it shouldn't drive the lesson plan. It should just be integrated into the lesson plan. Technology in schools is important but it shouldn't be the answer to everything."

ORHS computer teacher, Cathi Stetson, is no stranger to the concept of technology in schools. Before moving to the seacoast, Stetson taught in Pennsylvania for many years. She eventually trained as a Technology Integrator, which was a job she took on for seven years. During this time, her high school was given \$500,000 to be

od. In the end, we get a lot done because we have technology."

years. During this time, her high school was given \$500,000 to be used for technology. She said, "I think that technology is wonderful; it's a great tool, but it shouldn't drive the lesson plan. It should just be integrated into the lesson plan. Technology in schools is important but it shouldn't be the answer to everything." Now, at ORHS, Stetson is part of the Building Technology Committee.

Dr. Morse also has a lot of experience that could be beneficial if ORHS travels down the path of 1-to-1. Morse has helped bring 1-to-1 technology to several schools throughout his career, and is open to the idea of ORHS becoming 1-to-1. He spoke of the main positive aspects, saying, "the lesson becomes much more engaging and much more involved instantly rather than trying to schedule it out. 1-to-1 technology has great potential to be a real asset to students as well as staff."

However, Morse also talked about the importance of surveying both faculty and students before moving forward with implementing 1-to-1 at ORHS. He said, "1-to-1 technology comes with an enormous cost to the taxpayers of the system, so I want to know as a superintendent if we went down that path, and invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in ensuring that we have 1-to-1 technology in our high school, that the teachers are committed to utilizing it and the parents are supportive."

He also discussed that there would be some potential health benefits of students not having to carry around heavy textbooks and binders all day, but rather just one small laptop that held all of the resources they needed. ORCSD school board member, Alan Howland, stated that the school board has discussed 1-to-1 in the past, and recently conversations about simplifying the technology platforms used at ORHS have come up again. He brought up the fact that a large amount of ORHS students will go on to two and four year colleges, where they'll need to be using computers. He stated, "in my mind, it would be good for everybody to actually have access to computers. I'm not quite sure how exactly budgetarily we'd do it, whether we do a bulk buy, so the students get a discount, or if it's actually being built into the district's budget."

Howland also brought up a very current topic in the

ORCSD: cell phones. Of the topics recently discussed at meetings, he said, "cell phones are definitely on the docket. There is a group that came before us, in the fall, and they are deeply concerned about cell phone use at the middle school." Howland closed with, "to me, every student is eventually going to have to use technology...It's gone from big laptops now to tablets, but everybody's going to have a mechanism that can word process. So, I'd like to see a coherent policy that reflects that."

Joshua Olstad, Director of IT for the ORCSD, discussed an opposing health aspect of 1-to-1. He posed the question, "if students have laptops all day at school and they're expected to do homework on them, is that too much time in front of a screen?" The issue of screen time, and the question of how much is too much for students, is a subject often discussed throughout the ORHS community, even at the school board level.

Olstad also brought up the fact that the ORCSD is nearing the end of the 5 Year Strategic Plan, and he stated that he can see 1-to-1 technology becoming a large part of the new plan. He brought up some questions that would need to be worked through if and when a plan for 1-to-1 technology is made. He said, "there's going to be more and more internet usage. One of the big things that a lot of schools struggle with, and it's probably not so much the high school level, more elementary, but do the devices stay in school? Do they go home with students? If they go home, are we required by law to filter at home? And then of course, does the district buy the devices? Do families buy the devices?" While there are still many questions to be answered, the 1-to-1 discussion has definitely begun.

ORHS Principal Suzanne Filippone shared similar sentiments. She stated that, "I think that Oyster River could be a 1-to-1 school. I think that we would have to have a multi-year plan on how we're going to get there." Filippone also discussed one of the largest concerns of 1-to-1, the financial aspect. She stated that it will be important to figure out the financial support side of 1-to-1 before any drastic changes are made. While 1-to-1 is still just an idea at ORHS, it has the potential to become integrated into the curriculum. Of course, technology is a large part of our lives, and will continue to be so.

As Filippone stated, "it can help because whatever your next step is going to be, whether you're going to college or going into the workforce, technology changes so quickly, and you're going to be using it no matter what you do, and so I think the more that we can integrate it into what we do, the more we'll help kids." M

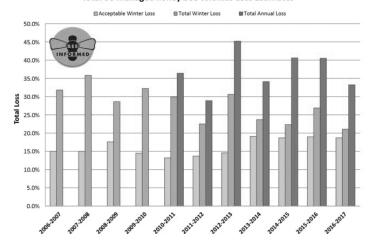
-Anna Kate Munsey Artwork by Chloe Jackson

## THE DECLINE OF BEES

"No bees, no food," said Mary Ellen McKeen, the Vice President of New Hampshire Beekeepers Association.

Bees have been dying at an alarming rate for nearly a decade. A survey of nearly 5,000 beekeepers across the United States found that a third of the bees they managed died between April 2016 and March 2017. Acceptable winter loss is roughly 15%, yet many beekeepers are losing closer to 30% of their bees annually.

#### Total US managed honey bee colonies Loss Estimates



Graph from Bee Informed

It seems New Hampshire beekeepers are struggling with high death rates of their bees even more than other parts of the country. According to a survey done by the New Hampshire Beekeepers Association, 65% of hives in New Hampshire died from October of 2016 to April of 2017.

Ben Stuart, who manages multiple hives in the Seacoast area, said, "each hive loss is a very emotional experience. The number of hives I've lost is something that is hard to admit for me. It feels as though I have done harm to my bees, but the bees are not supposed to be fully reliant on the beekeeper."

Stuart, like many others, finds the death rate concerning considering the large role which bees play in our lives. According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, bees, along with other species such as butterflies and hummingbirds, contributed to the pollination of about 75% of our flowering plants and crops. Honey bees helped produce approximately \$19 billion worth of agricultural crops in the U.S. alone in 2010.

Without bees, our lives would be awfully different. Produce such as broccoli, asparagus, cantaloupe, cucumber, blueberries, watermelon, almonds, apples, cranberries, cherries and many more, would be unavailable. Some of these items, such as apples and blueberries, provide a considerable amount of economic income for New England. The little insects have an incredibly large impact on our lives, and their population is declining in both New England and world-wide.

One reason honey bees struggle in New England is that they actually are not native to North America. They were brought over by settlers from Europe in the 1600s. "As a result, they are victims of all different sorts of things," said ORHS Spanish teacher, Tom Hausmann, who has kept bees in Maine for 12 years. All of Hausmann's bees died this winter during a cold snap.

## "They are victims of all different sorts of things."

Hausmann said, "Bees are an agricultural product. If you think of anything you plant in your yard, some years you have a great year for apples, some years you have a terrible year for apples. Bees work exactly the same way."

However, there is still a downward trend in their population. Their death can be attributed to a couple issues.

The Varroa Destructor, or Varroa mite, can be considered one of the main culprits. According to Ric Bessin of University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture, in Varroa Mites Infesting Honey Bee Colonies, the Varroa mite was introduced to the United States from Asia in the 1970's and has been problematic for honey bees ever since. The Varroa mite is a miniscule mite that spreads by latching onto roaming bees. It bites the bee and spreads viruses that weaken the bee and the rest of the colony, which eventually die.

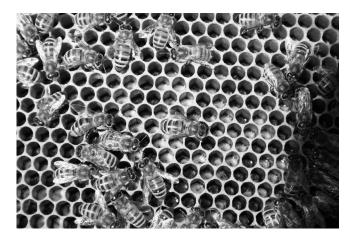


Photo from New Hampshire Beekeepers Association



Mites have been an increasing problem for Stuart. He explained that although there are multiple methods for monitoring and treating bees for mites, "I can't control how my neighbors keep bees and their bees can be a problematic source of mites for my bees."

McKeen alluded towards the difficulty of treating bees for mites saying, "we must walk a fine line attempting to kill a bug on a bug."

Habitat loss and its effects is another problem many bees and beekeepers experience. "As farms and land are converted to housing, malls, and industry, fewer beneficial plants are available for the bees to collect nectar and pollen which is their food supply," said Mckeen. Just like humans, nutrition is a major aspect of a bee's health.

## "Stop cutting your dandelions!"

McKeen added, "many gardeners purchase hybrid plants that look beautiful but have very little nutritional value to our bees." Without proper nutrition, bees are unable to fend off disease. This eventually results in death.

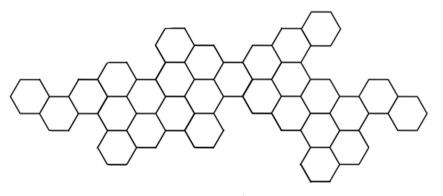
"Stop cutting your dandelions!" advised Stuart. These flowers are an important food source for bees because they bloom early in the season, when bees are just coming out of hibernation. Many people cut them, as they are technically a weed and considered undesirable. Pesticides are another way people attempt to control their weeds.

Pesticides have been found to have detrimental effects on bees. Neonicotinoid pesticides are commonly used in agricultural areas and have been proven to kill bees. Neonicotinoids are derived from nicotine and are water soluble, allowing them to spread into the pollen and nectar of plants a mile away from where the chemical was applied. These pesticides reduce bees' chance of survival and harm their reproduction.

McKeen encourages homeowners to contact their County Extension Office if they feel they must use pesticides. "They will help [you] save money by instructing [you] what agent works best for what problem and the precise amount to use." County Extension agents are university employees who help locals learn more about a subject. Education is an important part of saving the bees and beekeeping.

McKeen strongly encourages those who are interested in beekeeping to attend bee school, which is offered by every county's bee club in New Hampshire, prior to obtaining bees and all the equipment needed. "The uninformed beekeeper is our worst enemy when it comes to keeping our bees healthy and alive... Wanting to keep bees comes from good intentions. Failure to properly manage your bees affects every bee in that geographic location." Due to all the the variables which beekeepers must pay attention to, beekeeping is not a hobby for everyone. However, there are other ways you can assist bees.

Bees help provide us with tons of produce, and we can return the favor by providing them with nutritious food sources, such as bee-friendly flowers and dandelions. You can refrain from using pesticides, which are harmful for bees. Without bees, the cost of produce will rise. They are an important part of our ecosystem and without aid from the humans their numbers will continue to decrease.



-Lydia Hoffman



"How do I influence instruction? How do I influence better school systems for students? How do I create environments that are better for student learning and better for staff growth? That's what has really led me into becoming a superintendent," said Dr. James Morse, the superintendent of the Oyster River Cooperative School District.

Because of Morse's dedication and accomplishments throughout his career, he was recently nominated and honored with the 2018 New Hampshire Superintendent of the Year award. He said, "I was truly surprised, excited, pleased, and humbled that I was the one chosen for this honor."

Outside of Morse's academic career, he experienced difficulties that significantly impacted his upbringing. He had a tough childhood and grew up with an abusive parent. Eventually, in high school, he dropped out, though the school's guidance counselor recognized his potential and asked him to return.

After this, Morse's life positivity changed and he realized how an educator can make a powerful impact on a student. He believes that his past has shaped who he is today and has influenced his personal and professional choices and goals.

In light of receiving the award, Morse mentioned that he might not have become an educator or a superintendent if it was not for a positive influence of an educator in his past. He highlighted that, "my past is an important part of who I am. Now, as a superintendent, I always look through the lens of how do I help students? Or how do I open up an opportunity for a student?"

Growing up in a poor family, Morse had a supportive mother, but an abusive father who was an alcoholic. Along with this, Morse did not hang out with the best peer group, which did not help his situation.

As Morse grew older, he said, "I got angrier about the situ-

ation [with my father], and a lot of my friends were in similar situations, with alcoholic parents. By the time I entered high school, I was a pretty mad kind of kid, and I took it out on the world."

At the beginning of Morse's junior year in high school, his English teacher told the class about one of his summer trips. Morse said that, with all of the built up anger and the fact that, "I believed the story had no relevance to my life, I blurted out 'I am out of here!' and got up and left the class and quit school."

After being out of school for seven months, Morse received a call from his high school asking if he wanted to return. He agreed to go back because, he stated that, "my experiences not going to school gave me the sense that I was turning into my father, and I did not want to be that man. I wanted to be a different person. I knew that in order to avoid repeating his life, I needed to change mine."

In order to start to make a change, Morse went to summer school and earned A's on all of the work he had missed. He said, "I really wanted to prove to myself at that point that I was capable. I always thought that I was smart enough, though at times, I chose not to show it. But, this time, I decided to show it because I was trying to make a change."

He carried this positive change through the following school year. Morse noted that, not only was he presented with great opportunities, like starring in the senior class play, but he was thinking and gain experience as an administrator. After being the principal, he decided to apply for the superintendent position. Morse said that being a superintendent was a perfect career for him because his brain always thinks big.

Prior to becoming the ORCSD Superintendent, Morse's three previous superintendent positions were at school districts in Maine. At these schools, he was a key advocate for change. He worked hard in the field of computer technology, and even implemented 1-to-1 technologies for students, allowing everyone to have access to a personal computer.

After deciding to move on from Maine, Morse was drawn to Oyster River because of the school system's reputation, as well as the personal and professional benefits.

As soon as Morse became a part of the ORCSD, he worked hard to implement programs into the district that met the academic, emotional, and social needs of students. "When somebody comes up with a program, I want to know whether it's going to imprwove a student's ability to succeed," explained Morse.

Assistant Superintendent Todd Allen, works closely and collaboratively with Morse. He said that they have been able to tackle issues with programming in systematic and effective ways, which has resulted in more opportunities for students.

One of Morse's and Allen's current priorities is working on competencies with the middle school and the high school staff.

"My experiences not going to school gave me the sense that I was turning into my father, and I did not want to be that man. I wanted to be a different person. I knew that in order to avoid repeating his life, I needed to change mine."

fortunate to have a new English teacher that took him under her wing.

The efforts of the English teacher, as well as the school counseling office, and another year of hard work at summer school, led to his admittance into the University of Maine at Orono. Morse mentioned that his first semester of college was devoted to completing high school courses he had not yet taken. However, by the time second semester came, Morse was back on track.

After completing four years of college, he received his Bachelor of Arts in Art and went back for another year to receive his Master's Degree in Educational Leadership. Morse said that, "life was history from there," and everything fell into place.

He was then hired as an elementary school art teacher but realized he wanted to help the staff and students in a bigger way, beyond the role as a teacher. Because of this, Morse said that he, "got involved in computer technology early on and I also got involved in staff development early on. That allowed me to think more broadly [in terms of the school]."

As a result of Morse's interest in helping the entire school, he became the school principal, which allowed him to expand his Another focus is the replacement of the middle school building. In addition to these, at the middle school, they are monitoring the expansion of world language into sixth grade, and at the high school, they continue to have focused discussions about the new master schedule, balanced homework expectations, the change in start time, and the importance of mental health and wellness for students and staff across the district.

Morse also works alongside Suzanne Filippone, the high school principal. She stated that Morse has a great student-focused perspective, and, "a wonderful understanding of kindergarten all the way through twelfth grade. Having that perspective is important in his role."

Because being a part of a school district has been such a significant part of Morse's life thus far, he said that, "it's hard for me to think about retirement. I don't see it at an immediate sense because my reviews by the school board are very positive, and my relationship with the teaching staff, as well as the support staff, is positive. I love what I am doing. As long as all of those things are happening, I don't see myself leaving any time soon."

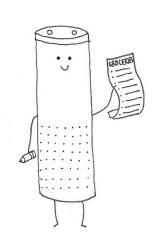
# HEY ALEXA, HOW SMART ARE YOU?

You're standing in your kitchen, doing the dishes. Your hands are covered in hot, soapy water, but you want to listen to some music. Instead of stopping what you're doing and disrupting your flow, you kindly ask your assistant, who puts on exactly what you want to listen to. Or maybe, you're in bed with the lights turned off, ready to sleep. You remember that you desperately need to pick up some bagels tomorrow. Fortunately, you can ask your assistant, right from the comfort of your bed, who will remind you in the morning.

Here's the best part: your assistant isn't a person; your assistant is a smart speaker with voice-to-text recognition.

For the last few years, there has been a huge increase in popularity with voice recognition speakers such as Amazon Alexa, Google Home, and HomePod. According to a new report from Juniper Research titled "Digital Voice Assistants: Platforms, Revenues & Opportunities 2017-2022", smart devices like the Amazon Echo, Google Home and Sonos One will be installed in a majority – that is, 55 percent – of U.S. households by the year 2022. I have been fortunate enough to be able to work with all three of these speakers, and while they are all slightly different in design and technology, they all have many of the same features using voice-to-text recognition. After using smart speakers for a few years now, I have picked up some helpful tips and tricks on how to fully utilize your smart speaker. Here's a closer look into my favorite features of Amazon Alexa, Google Home, and Apple's HomePod.

## "Alexa, tell Our Groceries to add Tide pods to the list."



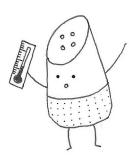
It may seem simple, but being able to shout out what groceries you need added to your shopping list can be super helpful. In my family, we have been using this for over a year now, and it has really changed the game. We all downloaded the app, Our Groceries, and synced it with Alexa. Now, whenever one of the four of us wants something added, we can tell Alexa (this can also work with other speakers like Google Home and HomePod) to add it, anytime and anywhere in the house. This keeps the entire fam-

ily involved in what food we get, and specifically, it guarantees that I can get the exact coconut milk creamer I like.

Of course you don't just have to use Alexa for keeping track of your shopping list. Alexa can sync with a ton of apps from your phone, keeping you hands free. Since Alexa is made by Amazon, she is synced with your account, making it super easy to order anything from amazon.com.

### "Okay Google, what's the temperature in living room?"

You can sync your smart speaker, whichever it may be, with your smart thermostat. We have our smart wifi thermostat, ecobee, synced with our smart speakers. Ecobee controls the temperature everywhere in our house. Using the smart speaker, in this case Google Home, you can ask Google to change the temperature in a room, turn the heat on or off, or check to see what the current temperature is.



Along with controlling your house's temperature, smart speakers can manage your TV, making it so that you could turn your TV on or off without the press of a button. You can also use this same feature with the lights in your house. For example, let's say you're downstairs alone in your kitchen and you are headed upstairs. You

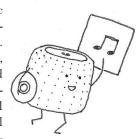
can have the lights turn on before you even walk up the stairs!

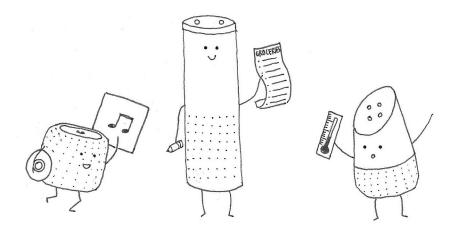
## "Hey Siri, play the Jonas Brothers in Kitchen."

Arguably the best feature of any smart speaker is the music playing ability. All of these units have speakers of their own, which are pretty good, that you can play music from. Or, you can ask the speaker to play music to one of your own speakers. We are devoted SONOS fans, so we usually have our speaker play to SONOS. For example, we would say "Hey Siri, play The Beatles in Living Room SONOS," and then the unit would talk to the SONOS speaker to get the music playing.

HomePod is Apple's smart speaker. Having come out on February 9th, HomePod is the newest addition to the voice-to-text rec-

ognition family. As said on Apple's website, HomePod is, "the ultimate music authority, bringing together Apple Music and Siri to learn your taste in music. It's also an intelligent home assistant, capable of handling everyday tasks - and controlling your smart home." HomePod, like the other smart speakers, will be your own personal assistant, but will focus more specifically on Apple Music and the music listening experience.





The Mac Observer's managing editor, Jeff Gamet, recently attended CES, the Consumer Electronics Show. CES is described as, "the world's gathering place for all those who thrive on the business of consumer technologies." At the show, Gamet saw a large amount of new products coming that have voice-to-text recognition. "Smart speakers and voice control were hot topics at CES this year to the point that it almost overshadowed every product I saw," said Gamet. "When the iPad first came out, it was as if every product featured some sort if support for the tablet. 'Check out our new four-slice toaster. It has iPad support!' That's what it was like with voice control this year." Gamet continued saying that voice control was the big feature for speakers and earbuds, locks, lights, and practically everything else with a computer chip and battery.

Gamet has been very impressed with how realistic Alexa has become. "Amazon has been nothing short of brilliant with making us perceive Alexa as true and reliable artificial intelligence instead of an efficient speech-to-text system. Alexa users have learned the syntax for speaking to their Echo, creating the illusion that the system understands what they're saying. Deviate from the words Alexa knows and it can't respond the way you expect."

Although Gamet clearly likes Alexa the best, he knows Alexa isn't perfect. Voice Recognition technology is new enough that there are still problems to work through. "My personal take on smart speakers and voice control platforms today is that the whole thing is a hot mess. No platform has a clear technological advantage, although Amazon is the market leader."

## "Amazon has been nothing short of brilliant with making us perceive Alexa as true and reliable artificial intelligence instead of an efficient speech-to-text system."

Gamet spoke on how voice control seemed to be added to products just so that box could be checked off. "But it also felt like momentum, and technology, had built up to the point where device makers felt compelled adding voice control to their products. Voice control was presented as if it was a necessity and not a glittery add-on," Gamet added.

His personal opinion is that Amazon Alexa is the smart speaker to beat. At CES this year, he noticed how many products were included Alexa into their technology. "I was fascinated by the number of mid-range and higher end speaker systems with Alexa built in. The Polk Command Bar is a great example. Polk unveiled it at CES as a high quality home entertainment system soundbar with wireless subwoofer and Echo-like far-field microphones built in for seamless Alexa support."

For himself, Gamet has chosen Alexa as his home smart speaker. "I settled on Alexa as my in-home voice assistant because I don't need to raise my iPhone or Apple Watch to speak commands—and because Alexa is often quicker to invoke my commands."

Whether you have Amazon Alexa, Google Home, the brand new HomePod, or something different, all voice assistants are wildly popular right now. Voice-to-text technology opens so many doors for us as a society. It is still too early to know exactly what role voice recognition will play, but it is clear that this is a technology that is going to make a big difference. When trying to decide which speaker would be the best for you, take Gamet's advice: "If you want the best voice platform for smart home control, go with Alexa. If you want the best information assistant, go with

Google Assistant. If you want the system that has the best chance of learning from you, pick Siri." M



-Skylar Hamilton Artwork by Emma Kovalcik

# Lessons With Laurie

## A profile on Child Development 1 & 2

Child Development: the only class where you can spend a period doing yoga with four year olds.

This course examines the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of humans. Child Development One and Child Development Two are each semester long classes. CD One focuses on conception through the first two years of life, and Two focuses on ages two through eight. In both courses students have the opportunity to work with children in PEP (preschool education program) located inside of Oyster River High School. This course is unique from other classes because of its interactive approach and its applicability to a wide range of students.

Former child development student, Mercedes Jewell ('18), recounts having the opportunity to read, do yoga, make cookies, and participate in a field day activity with PEP kids during Child Development. She says, "I liked how involved we were with the kids and how we had a mix of projects and tests."

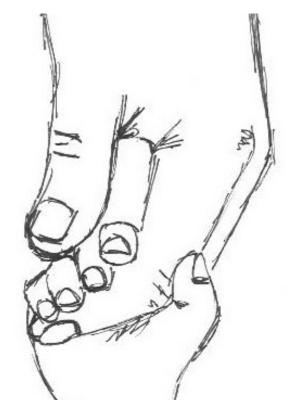
Projects in the class are applicable to real world situations. One assignment is to create a "baby budget" or list of all the products and prices needed for a baby's first two months of life. Students choose the best and most cost effective products and then calculate how many hours they would need to work to save up the money that a baby costs.

Laurie Grant, ORHS Child Development teacher, says, "I try to make projects something that students will be able to use in the future, and present them in the most interesting way possible."

Additionally, Grant likes to have a variety of guest speakers come in so that students in the class can "gain a better understanding of how different roles might affect or be impacted by children." This year a pregnant woman and midwife spoke to the child development one class. Grant hopes to have a social worker, psychologist, and speech pathologist speak to her child development two class.

Jewell says she definitely recommends Child Development because she learned a lot about children and how to help them grow in a healthy way. "It was a very eye-opening experience. It wasn't until I took this class that I found a love for working with kids and wanted to pursue a career with this," she adds.

Not all students that take the class are going to love children



enough to pursue a career that involves them, and some don't even like children, but that's okay. Grant says, "it's really important to at least have a respect for children and an understanding of how you can support them, even if you don't like them. So much of what we do in the world boils down to the relationships we have with people."

I'd argue that the best part of this course is the teacher. Grant is the coordinator of PEP, so she is very knowledgeable and passionate about child development.

Jewell supports this and claims that Grant is the best teacher she's ever had. She says, "Laurie offered lots of in class time to work on things and always made sure everyone understood what was going on."

Because of her excellent experience in the class, Jewell has continued her interest in child development by interning at PEP. Last year she ended up getting a summer job working with one of the kids she met. "Hopefully this summer I'll be able to actually work in PEP which would be very exciting," she says.

PEP appreciates the connections the Child Development course has given it to high school students. Stacy Brooks, a paraprofessional for PEP and former PEP parent, says "reading buddy day is a special day for the PEP kids. Working with the Child Development students gives the kids fun one on one time that they wouldn't have had otherwise."

Child Development is an amazing class because it will develop parenting skills for any student who eventually plans on having children of their own. It will also be helpful to students who plan to work with children as day care providers, early childhood educators, pediatric physicians and nurses, midwives, child psychologists and more.

Grant says, "children are part of the world so you're going to interact with them at some point. Whether it's your own children, or your neighbors, nieces, nephews, students, or patients, it's important to be able to connect with them, respect them, and understand they have value." M

-Phoebe Lovejoy

# Being An Only Child

"Often times [an only child] gets a lot of what they need, and sometimes it's valuable not to get what you need. I think that's a good lesson in life," said Brian Zottoli, Oyster River High School psychology teacher and father of two boys.

Our upbringing has a crucial effect on the rest of our lives; it is a time of major psychological development. When I tell people I'm an only child, they usually respond with something like, 'Oh really? Wow, I never would've guessed. You're way more normal than most only children.' There are a lot of negative stereotypes around being an only child. Only children are often perceived as inherently more selfish and socially awkward. While this can be the case, it's not as simple as that.

Growing up as an only child can actually change the structure of the brain. In 2017, a study was done at the Southwest University of China titled, "Only-child and non-only-child exhibit differences in creativity and agreeableness: evidence from

behavioral and anatomical structural studies." It was found that the volume of the medial prefrontal cortex was on average less in only children. This part of the brain is responsible for emotional regulation, such as personality and social behaviors.

Only children were also found to exhibit greater flexibility in their

thinking, but less agreeableness overall. The study found that this correlated with a smaller medial prefrontal cortex, but the results didn't demonstrate any difference in terms of intelligence between the two groups.

It's hypothesized that the cause of these things are related not only to a lack of socialization but also excessive attention from parents. "A lot of it has to do with the role of parents," said Zottoli. "I think that one of the first steps is just acknowledging the fact that having one child creates a different scenario for children, but a lot of parents avoid that like the plague."

Zottoli believes that only children will often have an easier time interacting with adults because they've grown up with them. "There were never any kids table or kids to talk to, so I had to learn how to interact with adults," said only child Emily Allyson ('18).

Allyson agrees that parents can make all the difference for an only child. "My parents always tried to make sure I didn't feel too much like an only child. I went to summer camp for seven years

and constantly interacted with other kids. I think this helped me avoid the common traits of only children," said Allyson.



Parenting is a challenge and a huge responsibility, and raising an only child is very different than raising a few children. "If parents are having only one kid they want to make [them] perfect, but it's never perfect. Teaching your kid to fail and recover from failure is critical ... or they can have more kids!" said Zottoli.

In the case of ORHS sophomore Emily Hadden ('20), her family certainly had more kids.

Hadden has grown up with seven siblings, and they've helped her grow into who she is today. "I'd be very spoiled and very lonely [without them] -- a serious case of only child syndrome," said Hadden.

Although Hadden believes that her family would have been more financially stable with fewer children, she can't see any other negatives. "They've all taught me how to take responsibility — I always say that I learn from their mistakes," said Hadden. "I've learned to listen to others and how to interact with different

"If parents are having only one kid

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types of people — a lot of people skills to say the least."

Daycare is a common option for any kid, but Zottoli can see it being especially beneficial for only children. "It's expensive, but I think that just is a level of connection to kids where you have to learn how to get along with others and be around others,"

said Zottoli. "Whether you have siblings or not, I think you have to be with other human beings to learn the rules of the road"

Although only children generally have less time interacting with others as they grow up, they aren't aliens. "I don't think [the stereotypes] are necessarily true ... I do think it is possible though, but it is more dependent on the parents than the absence of siblings," said Allyson.

A parent should always be thinking about how they want to be raising their children. When raising an only child, the parent may just need to put more effort into making sure that their child grows up to be a well-socialized person.

At the end of the day, being an only child isn't going to doom you to crippling social anxiety. "It's hard to generalize," said Zottoli. "there are some only children that I've taught that have been the most together people that there [are]."

Allyson has experienced that people will often expect her to behave like the stereotypical only child before they get to know her. As is true with any stereotype, it's important not to jump to conclusions. In the case of only children, you'll find that they're

just like everyone else: imper-

fectly human. M





# \$ How Much Can You Save?\$

For those who don't know me, I'm a shopaholic. I love online shopping or going to the outlets and picking out outfits. Yet I also hate spending money, so, as you can see, these two topics clearly contradict. If there's a will, there's a way, and there's one way you can buy all the items you want for an unreal price. Coupons!

 ${
m M}$ ost jobs for students don't have the best pay, especially as a junior in high school. I enjoy having money to go out with friends whether it is going out to eat, shopping, or something else! One strategy I use to keep myself in check is to never purchase full price items. I may want it so badly, but knowing there's a way to get it cheaper makes it worth it. In order to stick by my ways, I have twelve fake emails all with different names I make up as I go. Two of these emails are Gmail, which is much more secure than other options, while my other ten are Yahoo emails. Yahoo easily allows you to create, as far as I know, as many accounts as you please under one number, which makes it extremely easy to recover any email if your password is forgotten. But there is a downfall to this technique. It's difficult to keep each email updated and in check with the latest deals from one's most frequently visited websites. Also having many emails linked under one number leads to confused employers looks, when you're out shopping and are asked for your email for a rewards program.

A simple trick, I personally use to recieve basic coupons for a store is joining their email list or "exclusive club." By doing so, you may be sent a variety of 10-25% off coupons and sometimes deals such as \$10 off \$25, or \$25 off \$75 or more. If you need a coupon as soon as possible, putting in your birthday as the next day works great as well! "In many stores there are clearance sections, so the stuff is already on sale and a good deal. Then when you add on a coupon you get it for even less so you're paying less money for a good quality item," explains couponer Jacqueline Coxen ('19). Beginning in the clearance section is always a positive start, because many coupons are still eligible on top of the clearance prices.

Besides coupons by email, there are other websites which can help you find promo codes, or in-store coupons. One new growing startup known as Honey, is becoming more popular, commonly being promoted on Youtube. "Honey is basically a tool that automatically filters and applies the best coupons on the internet to your cart at checkout whenever you are purchasing something. When I was looking for formal dresses online, it



applied a \$20 discount to a dress which I probably would have paid full price for if it wasn't for Honey," says Natalia Pruszak ('18). When downloading Honey to your browser, a small alien creature in the shape of a coin will appear with a button, "apply coupons." By clicking this button, Honey scans the web for any coupons one can apply to this purchase. Unfortunately, it doesn't normally find exceptional coupons, but you're likely to get around 10% off with only the click of a button.

Yet some reviews state Honey can potentially slow down your browser. I've had Honey for a few months now, and Chrome



is equally as speedy, but this could potentially change based on a different browser. Since Honey is a new startup, currently it is offering great deals for people who join, which is FREE. If you share the link with a friend, "https://www.joinhoney.com/invite," then you can receive \$5. Along with the guarantee if there are no coupons applicable to your purchase, you can earn "Honey gold" back. 50 Gold is equivalent to \$0.50, and is eligible to redeem once one exceeds 1,000 gold. "From my experience, it can be difficult to find good deals online and when I do, it's usually canceled out by a high shipping fee. Most people will just pay full price for an item because they don't want to spend the time looking for coupons and so that's when Honey becomes super beneficial," explains Pruszak. Honey is a considerable tool, for those who want to find a deal, but do not want to spend time scouring the internet for one.

As Pruszak states, many coupons are commonly canceled out by the high rate of shipping, and on top of this, you must wait upwards of a week or more to receive your item. This can all be solved with ShopRunner or Amazon Prime.

ShopRunner is a website which allows you to receive free two day shipping from any store listed on their website. Many of the stores include high end brands, but there a still quite a few more reasonably priced stores on the list. But there are a few negatives to this technique, one being you must spend \$25, which commonly you need a price similar to this to apply more coupon codes. Another, is the high cost of ShopRunner. \$79.99 per year, but it is free for a one month trial, free for a year for PayPal

users, and free in general for anyone with an American Express card. When speaking to an associate when I was accidentally charged \$79.99 (whoops), they answered right away and kindly refunded me. Great customer service and free shipping? It couldn't get much better.

Amazon Prime is also a great outlet when it comes down to free shipping, but at a cost. For a while I signed up for a new free trial every month with a new email, which became quite tiresome until I learned you get free amazon prime as a college student. When a student takes a course at Oyster River High School through Project Running start, you are given a Great Bay Community College email, which you can then use to become eligible for FREE Amazon Prime.

On top of these few websites, there are so many websites out there such as RetailMeNot, Groupon, Coupons.com, and more. "RetailMeNot is really good if we are out to dinner or shopping at the mall. If I'm online I will do my shopping through Ebates so I can earn money while I'm shopping," says extreme couponer Katherine Cauley. There are many websites online which allow you to find the latest deal whether it's at a restaurant, clothing store, or even fast food.

"We love the Krazy Coupon Lady for couponing offers! They detail what stores are offering which deals, where to find the coupons, what apps to download, what rebates are out there, and what the final cost will be if you follow their tips," said couponer Donna Coxen. A good portion of websites have easily clippable coupons, allowing you to print them, and use them in store. "All the people on TLC network had these binders full of coupons in little plastic dividers. One year for Christmas, I gave her a three inch binder filled with these plastic pages that you'd normally fill with baseball cards," says Jacqueline Coxen ('19).

## **Donna Coxen**



Donna Coxen, mother of two Oyster River graduates, Caitlin and Ryan Coxen, and one currently enrolled student, Jacqueline Coxen, uses coupons every day in order to help save money. "I really started couponing when I started a family. My mother ALWAYS used coupons, so I just followed along! Couponing saves so much money, especially if you do it right. People behind me in line sometimes are in awe of saving \$10 or more," says Coxen. She's passed her love of couponing down to her oldest daughter Caitlin, who even wrote her college essay on her passion. "She is exceptional. Even my other kids are learning the value of a coupon when they are spending their own money," says Coxen. But she warns others that when you find a good deal, it's difficult to pass up. "Sometimes I buy things just because there is a decent coupon. I need to remind myself to not do that if I won't use it or need it. Another downfall is storage! Couponers call

it their "haul." Once I left Shaws with 50 boxes of free pasta! Try finding space for that!" Donna frequently clips coupons from the Sunday newspaper, and has three coupon sorters. One sorter is filled with health and beauty coupons, which she uses at Target. She hasn't gotten as far as filling a binder, but her daughter Caitlin has.

Shockingly you can save more money than you know by using coupons. Donna thinks back on her experience when she was at Walmart. Her total after shopping was \$92. Once her coupons were applied, it was a whopping \$11. Her recommendation to others is, "Save, save, save! Why not. I've been asked by neighbors to give a tutorial on couponing. The thrill is there. My advice would be to try it! It gets addicting. If you follow the rules of couponing, you can save a lot of money, especially for stay-at-home moms or dads," explains Coxen.

## **Katherine Cauley**

Katherine Cauley, known as the Princess of Paper Products after being featured on TLC's extreme couponing show, has been couponing since 2005. The 32 year old also appeared on TLC's "Black Friday Blitz" edition for couponing on Black Friday. Originally she posted photos of her stockroom filled with items she had couponed, when TLC came across it and contacted her. They asked for updated pictures, then invited her on the show. "I had to plan my trip and I only had a two week window in order to find the sales in stores that week, where I was going to do it, and get my coupons ready. Then I made my grocery list and went in ahead of time, and ordered the stuff on Market Basket so they would have it when I went to 'fill,"

explains Cauley. She said she rarely has coupons not work, but there was some confusion on the show when she had a few too many coupons.

The TLC camera crew followed her around the store as she shopped for items she had coupons for. In this case, she prepared the coupons she was bringing, but sometimes when she needs coupons on the go, she will use apps or websites to quickly find one to apply to where she is. "I'll use a coupon for anything you can use a coupon for. I use them for eating out, travelling or shopping. Whether it be groceries, clothes, appliances, I have apps on my phone, when I know I'm going shopping that day and type in the store in order to find a coupon," says Cauley.



-Felicia Drysdale Photos from Katherine Cauley and Coxen Family





















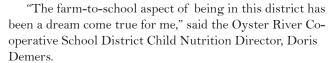






# Doris Demers

Oyster River Cooperative School District Child Nutrition Director



Ever since Demers was hired in 2012, significant improvements have been made to the ORCSD lunch program. Because of Demers, ORCSD is now partnered up with the University of New Hampshire's (UNH) Thompson School of Applied Sciences. Through this partnership, the district has been provided with hydroponically grown fresh, local vegetables.

As soon as Demers became a part of ORCSD, she was eager to expand upon what the previous Child Nutrition Director, Andrea Tran, had started. Demers noted that some of her priorities when beginning this position were to: "pursue a strong farm-to-school program, try to break even [with the budget], and inspire [her] employees to make good food."

Her focus on nutrition, sustainability, and the use of local produce has allowed her to make a positive impact on the food service program. She is closely connected to the people with whom she serves and works, and she recognises the needs of the community.

Demers' interest in pursuing a strong farm-to-school program developed from her childhood experiences. Demers grew up on a farm and came from a family who loved gardening. She said that when growing up, her family, "ate off the gardens all summer, and canned and froze the food to eat all winter."

Even though Demers grew up both on a farm and gardening, she never saw herself pursuing a career in nutrition services.

Prior to becoming the Child Nutrition Director, Demers worked for several caterers, did the bookkeeping for



her husband's landscaping business, and spent some time in retail management.

After spending several years in retail, Demers decided to take on a new career as a Child Nutrition Director with hopes to have more time for family. Before becoming employed in ORCSD, Demers worked as the Child Nutrition Director for the York, Maine school district for nine years and for the last five, she simultaneously worked for the Kittery, Maine school district. Demers said that she, "took [the job] and ran with it. I had so much fun."

Despite her love for working in two school districts, running both was hard because at times, both districts needed her at once. However, Demers never regretted working at both because, she said, "every district I go to, I learn more."

After Demers completed her time at the York and the Kittery school districts, she was eager to apply for the open position at Oyster River. "I thought to myself: 'I have to try <code>[and apply]</code> because that's always where I wanted to be."

Following her start at Oyster River, she went to school part-time at UNH. Demers' course of study was Nutrition and Culinary Arts, which allowed her to become a Dietetic Technician, Registered. She used this degree to her advantage at ORCSD.

Demers was especially drawn to the district after being informed about the Sustainability Committee and the available funds for buying local food. Demers said that, "right then, I thought someone needed to pinch me. I thought: 'who wouldn't want to work with that?'"

With help from the Sustainability Committee, Demers connected with Jonathan Ebba, the facilities manager for the UNH Thompson School horticultural technology program, and insisted upon buying all of the vegetables he, as





well as his students, were growing. The students are using a hydroponic system, which is a way of growing plants in a water based, nutrient rich solution instead of in soil.

Demers highlighted that, "if foods can be grown locally, they are so much more nutritious. The longer that fruit or vegetable is off the plant, it loses its nutrients. The sooner you can get the food onto the plate, the better <code>[off]</code> you are."

Along with providing the district with fresh, local vegetables, Demers has drastically revamped the district's menus and has incorporated a variety of new foods into the menus. One of the more popular meals at the high school is tacos, which is served on Mondays and Tuesdays.

According to the Child Nutrition Services webpage on the ORHS website, ORCSD school lunches now meet or exceed the nutritional standards established for all schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), which is a federally assisted program operating in both public and private schools.

In order to meet or exceed the nutritional requirements, a fruit or vegetable must be incorporated into the meal, as well as a variety of foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, and salt. The meals also contain at least the minimum requirement of calories, fat, protein, calcium, iron, vitamin A, and vitamin C that a student must consume in the given meal.

Mark Milliken, the Dean of Faculty at the ORHS, is impressed with all of the improvements Demers has made to the program, as well as the district's menus. Milliken said that, "Doris has tried really hard to add variety and keep it local. It's a tough balance to be nutritious and also

making sure kids like the food. I think she has tried to strike a good balance."

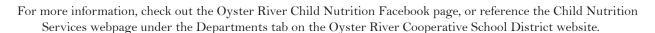
Because of Demers' efforts to improve the program in the district, the benefits expand outwards into the community. ORCSD is now more connected with UNH and the students, as well as the staff, have become more inspired to eat healthier both in and out of school.

Over the past five years, Demers mentioned that all of the improvements would not have been possible without the help from the lunch staff. Demers spoke highly of the lunch staff and said, "I am just so proud of them because they really have done well. They'll do anything; I have never had such a dedicated staff as I do now."

Tim Kenaley, an ORHS Cafeteria Manager who often meets with Demers, said that, "the produce has never been better. We are getting absolute phenomenal fresh food and we try to handle it all as best we can." Kenaley continued, "we even have people come from outside of the district and are impressed by the meals being provided."

Despite all of the significant improvements, Demers mentioned that, "I don't believe we are ever where we need to be; I feel like we can always improve." Going forward, Demers wants the program to remain financially stable with a focus on purchasing local food. She will continue to meet with the Cafeteria Managers every month and make amendments to the menu. She plans to identify the food trends and she hopes to expand breakfast.

Not only does Demers want to remain at Oyster River to continue to develop the program, but she also finds great joy in her job. "I feel like I am home at Oyster River. I absolutely love this district."



- Abby Schmitt Artwork by Emma Kovalcik



























## A Football Fantasy Come True



"I'm happy for my friends at Oyster River that they finally have the opportunity to play football in high school. I only wish that it happened sooner so I didn't have to leave <code>[Oyster River]</code>, but I fully support this cooperative program and have done so since the idea's conception," said Noel Ouellette, a sophomore at St. Thomas Aquinas High School.

On Wednesday, January 17th, 2018, a new cooperative football agreement between Portsmouth and Oyster River was approved by the school board with a 6-0 vote. The agreement states that any student (boy or girl) from Oyster River High School who wants to play football will be allowed to participate on the Portsmouth High School football team, beginning as soon as next fall. This agreement has already been well received by the district and has a lot to offer for our community.

The news resonated well with community members and students alike, who showed support at school board meetings and public forums. Oyster River students who play on either club or travel football teams were especially thrilled about the decision. A football team for Oyster River students has been desired for what seems like forever.

The cooperative team was originally proposed in April of 2016, though it was denied by the school board. There were concerns about risk of injury, compliance with Title IX, and finding a team with similar start times. Portsmouth's similar start times made the decision easier this time around.

"Unlike the cooperative proposal we considered in 2016, this proposal seems to benefit both Oyster River and Portsmouth for the long-term," explained Dan Klein, a member of the school board.

When it came down to choosing the school that Oyster River would cooperate with, both Portsmouth High School and Dover High School were considered. Portsmouth was chosen primarily because their school schedule aligned more closely with Oyster River's new early start time. "Portsmouth's interest in creating a football cooperative team with Oyster River was also longer standing than Dover's," said Klein. This cooperative agreement will last for two years, then will have to be voted upon again to either continue or end the agreement. Unfortunately, this agreement came too late for some students, such as Ouellette.

After Ouellette completed his freshman year at Oyster River, his passion for football influenced him to switch schools into a district that had a team, "I couldn't stay any longer in a school that didn't give me the opportunity to play the sport I love," he said. Ouellette also mentioned that he thoroughly enjoyed his freshman year at Oyster River, and explained that he wouldn't have left the community if he had the chance to play football here.

Jared Benoit ('19) is another football player and student at ORHS. Benoit previously played football for the Oyster River Youth Association (ORYA), then progressed to the Seacoast



Titans team when he reached high school. Unfortunately, the Seacoast program did not run this year, leaving Benoit without a football team to play on. When he heard about the recent cooperative team between Portsmouth and Oyster River, he explained that "the agreement is a great opportunity for the young kids who still play in ORYA, because they'll grow into the program over time and ultimately it could be a great team." Benoit is currently contemplating the decision of playing for the cooperative team if it does start next fall.

This will be the second combined team at ORHS, with the girls' hockey team providing a positive example. "Nearly all of students I've spoken to have expressed strong support. Based on the experience of our girls hockey players (which already have a cooperative team with Portsmouth) I'm confident that the Portsmouth students will welcome the new program," said Klein. The team will also give students who do not currently play football the opportunity to try something new.

ORHS Athletic Director, Andy Lathrop, previously worked at Bishop Brady High School, which had a football team. "My experience with football was a very good one; the friday night football games were a lot of fun for the students. It really brought the community together." Lathrop played a part in helping the school board come to a consensus on the decision. He served as the "neutral party," helping the board work with NHIAA regulation. "For example, I researched all the effects of Title IX, programming, long term obligations to the school board, things like that," he said.

At Bishop Brady, Lathrop observed that football was providing an opportunity for kids to play a different type of sport that may be a better fit for them; "For kids with different body types and fitness levels, football gives them an opportunity to play a sport which doesn't necessarily require specific body types," explained Lathrop. "I found there were kids getting involved with football who were unlikely to do other sports if it wasn't offered." However, this potential influx of athletes joining the program brings up the discussion of injury.

There is some concern about the injuries that come with playing football. Due to the fact that it is a collision sport, there is a higher risk of injury than in non-collision sports. Lathrop explained that football has come a long way, with new technology shedding light on some precautions that can be taken. "There is much more emphasis on non-padded and non-contact practices. They basically do not hit in practice anymore. It's not like it used to be," said Lathrop. "They really focus on tackling technique, not leading with your head."

Klein agrees that injury is something to consider, but feels that it should not define the sport of football. "I think we should be concerned about the risk of harm related to all of the sports we offer and we should take every reasonable step to mitigate those risks," said Klein. "Beyond that we need to accept that injury is an unfortunate reality in sports."

Ultimately, Klein feels that the decision to play football should be left up to the families, and is excited that ORHS students will now have the chance to participate. "I'm really pleased that we ended up with a program that offers our students an opportunity to play a sport that is important to them on many levels," he said. Although the program is still awaiting NHIAA approval, the decision is a popular one, which many have awaited for years. M

"I'm really pleased that we ended up with a program that offers our students an opportunity to play a sport that is important to them on many levels."

> -Aliyah Murphy Photo by ORCSDVideo



he genre of country music has always carried stereotypes of hick-themed, hillbilly songs by racist and sexist redneck artists. Despite being one of America's most popular music categories for generations, it may be (along with rap) our nation's most polarizing genre as well. Although many have viewed country songs throughout history as ones that depict Southern culture and heritage, often with far-right and even offensive undertones, country music has always had an overlooked liberal sect. In this case of preconcieved opinions and beyond, we need to look into the entirety of a certain topic before developing our own thoughts on subject.

Looking back to the beginning of when country music began transitioning from its unique bluegrassy roots to more mainstream music in the '60s and '70s, this liberal side of country music became prevalent, but relatively unnoticed. It was either intentionally hidden by 'traditional' country fans who attempted to maintain this Southern image, or was naturally overlooked. This being said, even some of the most legendary and recognizable trailblazers of early country music history were far from the typical Republican southern musician. These icons include outspoken marijuana-advocate and environmentalist, Willie Nelson, who has endorsed a handful of candidates over the years, not one being Republican, and most recently, Hillary Clinton. Johnny Cash, one of few country artists who is even more well known than Nelson, was certainly far from a conservative. Although "The Man in Black" never outwardly proclaimed himself to be a liberal, much of his music was highly political, including themes having to do with his anti-war beliefs, his sorrow towards Americans living in poverty, and even his disappointment with how America's indigenous people were being treated in his 1964 album Bitter Tears: Ballads of the American Indian. Cash later quietly supported Democrat Al Gore for President in 1988 and criticized George Bush during the Iraq War.

Despite Nelson and Cash being on the left-side of the political spectrum, early country music is looked back on to this day as the base of country music's conservative history. Although other top artists from this time like Waylon Jennings, George Jones, and Merle Haggard weren't outwardly political on either side, they sang of similar themes - typical country ones like small-town living, farms, drinking etc. - as more deeply-religious, and at the time racist artists like David Allan Coe, and eventually became thought of as having these same beliefs even though they didn't.

Because of the often similar twang and banjo-laced tempo of pre-1980s country music (and in other ways later in history), many non-country music listeners have trouble telling country artists apart, and therefore are prejudiced to generalize them and group them into a blob of Southern Conservatives, who they consider racist and sexist.

Additionally, because a large majority of country musicians throughout history are southern-born, white men, it is in some way fair to assume that most of them are Republicans, regardless of the themes they sing about. A Pew Research Center 'party affiliation' study in 2016 estimated that today upwards of 85% of white males in the 'Deep South' of the United States are Republican, a consistent ballpark range for much of modern American history. Because of this, country music artists that are left-leaning often don't make a big deal about their politics, most likely with the fear of losing a portion of their highest demographic of listeners. Even when these liberal ideas are proclaimed, in or out of music, they're often ignored or pushed away because of their clash with the ideals of typical Deep South culture, which aren't tied to racism but rather often traditional Republican points with a greater emphasis on the military, religion, guns, freedom, and less concern regarding environmental, education, social, and equality issues.

A great obvious example of this under the radar liberal side of country is with Garth Brooks. Brooks is not only the most successful country artist of all time, but is also the highest selling solo artist of all time, and the only artist ever to have seven albums

with ten millions sales in history. Despite hitting his peak in the early '90s, Brooks remains to be one of the most popular musicians in the world, as his ongoing multi-year world tour with his wife, fellow country music superstar Trisha Yearwood, is among the top 10 highest grossing tours in history at close to \$400,000,000 thus far, according to Billboard. Although much of his music is softer and deeper than most in country music, like any country star he has his fair share of songs about drinking whiskey, honky-tonks, farm life, and even rodeos. So he must be a conservative right?

Nope. The most popular country music artist of all-time sure seems to be a Democrat, and although shocking, this is simply undiscussed because of the preconceived opinions tied with country music. Brooks' song "We Shall Be Free" off of his 1992 album, The Chase, gives us pretty decent hints of his liberal views, as it discusses, "when the skies and the oceans are clean again," "when we're free to love anyone we choose," "when the world's big enough for all different views," and is basically full of liberal-leaning messages for its duration. As I read the lyrics, it seems like it could almost be the narrative of a powerful speech for a traditional Democratic-political candidate. Funny enough, Brooks actually performed the song at Barack Obama's 2008 inauguration, and later said to CNSNews "I love [Obama] to death, and I fully support him." A decade later, Garth turned down an invitation to play at Donald Trump's inauguration. Additionally, his wife Yearwood is on the record for having made a handful of contributions to Democratic candidates.

Fellow superstar country couple, Tim McGraw and Faith Hill, both among the most successful country artists of all time, are among the most outward Democrats in all of the genre's stars. "It's innate in me to be a blue-dog Democrat. I'm not saying I'm right or wrong, but that's what I am," said McGraw to People Magazine in 2008. "My wife and I and our family will do everything we can to support Obama." The two have also been outspoken on their pro-gun control views and attended a fundraiser with Hillary Clinton last year.

The most notable example of the liberal side of country music have come in multiple instances with the three-woman band the Dixie Chicks. The band has been politically outspoken on a number of occasions, and their criticism of Republican politicians have caused an uproar from many fans and musicians in the country music community. In 2003, lead singer Natalie Maines explained how she was "embarrassed" by President George W. Bush and his views on war. After receiving public backlash from fellow country stars like Toby Keith and Reba McEntire, the band's sales and popularity took a huge fall. Years later, in 2016, the Dixie Chicks were back in the spotlight for criticizing Republican Presidential candidates Donald Trump and Ted Cruz, and even played a song on their tour in front of a backdrop which depicted as the devil.

Even into 2018, two of today's top country stars have top twenty country hits with some very liberal leaning songs. Luke Bryan's "Most People Are Good," which discusses the negativity spread by today's news and features the lines: "I believe you love who you love, ain't nothing you should ever be ashamed of," its chorus probably wouldn't seem to many like it could be off of a country album called (if you weren't sure by Bryan's thick Southern accent or appearance on every country award show) What Makes You Country. Additionally, Australian superstar Keith Urban's new single, "Female," touches on his feminist views, and discusses issues like sexual conduct and women in religion. These songs are just the latest instances of the liberal side of country music that has been relevant, but hidden, for decades.



Garth Brooks with Barack Obama (Pete Souza, White House)

-Zach Leichtman

## JUNCTION, THE BAND

A band composed of high school boys has been making waves across Durham and the local music scene, performing at places like the Stone Church in Newmarket, Mouth of the River's quarterly fundraiser called Coffee House, and even the occasional wedding.

What's their name? Junction. How did they get that name?

"I swear to God, we've been thinking of a name for about a year...I was like 'let's just call ourselves Junction because we already have two songs called Junction'... We might tack on a few extra words later."



Starting a band isn't the easiest task known to man, and learning the ropes on stage might not go as evenly as one would expect.

The frontman of Junction, Jake 'Weggy' Weglarz ('18), explains how he first got into performing. "It was sophomore year, and Nick Ryan ('18) was on stage [at Coffee House], and he was like 'hey, wanna perform a song with me?' and I was like 'Yeah, okay, sure. Why not.' I knew all the lyrics, and I wasn't gonna screw it up. We did it and it was really bad; I forgot the lyrics, and Nick looked at me weird."

Weglarz hasn't always been a singer but decided it was time to start refining his vocals after his rather rough first time on stage. "I started taking lessons last year around October, so I guess I've been taking it a little more seriously since then."

There are plenty of band dynamics that the audience doesn't always notice. "When you're up on stage and somebody messes up, then the last thing you wanna do is just stop everything. So I find myself trying to improvise and get messages across to bandmates without actually telling them, which is a skill that is very hard to have. People who play sports have it. When you're in a band, you have to be able to improvise if things go wrong. They never wanna have to stop the music."

Aside from stage fright and the potential musical mishap, keyboardist/guitarist, Jake Kaplan, ('18) believes that the most nerve-racking part about performing is the anticipation. "Once you get on stage and once you start playing the first song, the nerves go away. It's all the anticipation that builds up before... those first notes, those first chords that I play, I'm a little nervous, but then it goes away and it's just fun, absolute exhilaration."

Designing sounds isn't exactly Weglarz's forte. Producing is something that he leaves to his bandmates. "Lots of it is done by Jake and Colin, but for me, it's more like if I don't know,

then I'll go for it and if it sounds nice, then it sounds nice," says Weglarz

"Me and Colin are a part of the music behind it, and Weggy's of course the lyricist," Kaplan elaborates. "I think we all have pretty equal roles. Even though Liam doesn't write music, he has amazing drum fills, things that I could never even imagine or create... We are all very open-minded, and we are accepting of each other's ideas."

Colin Flores ('20) has been playing guitar for, "about two years now." With electric guitar as his primary weapon, he adds a lot of substance to the songs. "In terms of songwriting it's usually myself, Ian, and Jake Kaplan, but Weggy and Liam do help out in that process."

"Colin still amazes me. He just comes up with these sick licks off the back of his hand, just like how Liam does [on drums]," says Weglarz.

Weglarz's younger brother, Liam ('20), is the drummer of the band. "I started drumming about halfway through 8th grade. My three friends and I were all taking Mr. Ervin's guitar class and started listening to classic rock more frequently. One day we went to Colin Flores' house who already had drums, guitar, bass, and a microphone. One of my friends took lead guitar, one took bass and the other took vocals, so I was basically stuck with drums for my first band ever. After a lot of practice and jamming, it got fun."

Liam describes being in the same band as his older brother as "moderately okay for the most part." There are other things that bother Liam more. "Having two Jakes in one band can get annoying."

And as for Jake Weglarz growing up with his brother's crash-smashing, "you learn to get used to it. I'm not deaf, so that's good... We have ear protection downstairs where we practice."



Jake Weglarz: First time on stage didn't go so well for him, so he started taking singing lessons. Younger brother, Liam, is in the band.



Jake Kaplan: Sang "Wish You Were Here" by Pink Floyd at the 2017 Mr. Bobcat pageant. Plays keyboard, guitar, and vocals.



Colin Flores: First started playing guitar two years ago, landed spot as the lead guitarist in the band.



Ian Miles: Pianist, guitarist, and vocalist, Ian is the newest member of the band. Currently the main bass player.



Liam Weglarz: Initially got into guitar in middle school, but eventually discovered that drums were his calling.

Building a song requires many components from different people, and the newest member has proven himself capable of creation. "Ian comes up with amazing basslines. He's also a really good singer," says Kaplan.

Ian Miles ('19) plays bass for Junction and was recently recruited to the band after showing off his piano and singing skills with an epic cover of "Sign of the Times" by Harry Styles at a previous Coffee House. Miles integrated into the group quite smoothly.

Three of the five bandmates are capable of playing more than one instrument, making their positions interchangeable. "If Ian wanted to play piano, he probably could," says Kaplan. "Ian will be singing in the future. He has a really good voice for particular songs. We are all pretty flexible."

Stylistically, Junction's sound does not stray far from the rock scene. "It's definitely a mix of Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, the Beatles, Rush, and maybe a little bit of Tenacious D in there," says Jake Weglarz.

These mates get along together quite well, but they do face issues that can cause some frustration amongst them. "There usually are some disagreements in some choices for songs, but we'll just either compromise, or for one song, someone will be more of a creative lead," says Miles. Issues like, "butting heads on choosing songs [to cover] or writing originals," can sometimes cause small problems for the group of boys, but isn't always the main concern. "I think the big one is just trying to all be happy about how things come out, especially with writing," he says.

"It's really hard to do songs that everyone is satisfied with," says Jake Weglarz.

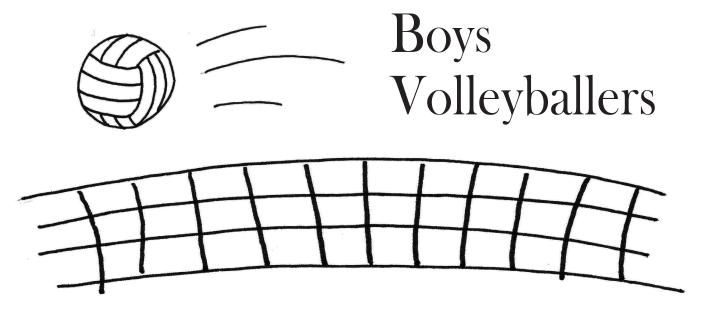
Managing a band isn't all that easy when many members already have time consuming obligations, like work and school. "It is pretty tough because having five guys with totally different schedules makes it hard to find a time where we can all organize ourselves," says Miles, who has a job in addition to school. "A lot of the time, four of us will be able to make it and then someone will be behind on whatever song we are working on. We try to find at least one time each week where we can check in."

The band might have some bumps along the way when it comes to writing, but they typically never hit a roadblock. "Well there's always small disagreements with songwriting and one person who thinks the song should go one way and another person who thinks it should go a different way, but usually we can work around things like that pretty easily," explains Flores. "Liam and Weggy go to Waterville on the weekends, plus I've had drivers ed which will be done soon, but that's certainly been an obstacle... [Our schedules] can make it stressful if we have a gig coming up that we really need to practice for, but we can't find the time."

Speaking of gigs, the band have might have gotten their start in the multipurpose room at ORHS, but they have been trying to branch out to different venues and occasions. "I've played at The Freedom Cafe in downtown Durham, The Stone Church in Newmarket, a couple of ORHS sporting events, last year's senior graduation at the UNH Field House, my friend's family's wedding reception last summer, and the Salem Paws Walk," says Liam, who can brag to all of his friends that he was hired to play at a wedding. "It was fantastic. We played an hour and a half set, and eventually near the end of the show, everyone was drunk and dancing along to our music. It was also my first paid gig which was a huge step up for me personally."

Yes, starting a band sounds both intimidating and rewarding, but if you have the drive to do it, you often do not mind the complications. "For me, it only took five determined guys with whatever sh\*tty equipment we could get our hands on, and skill. That's all it took for us to start off," closes Liam Weglarz.

- Jess Speechley



"Volleyball is a sport that is introduced to all people early in their lives, but isn't available for guys the way most other sports are," said Joe Morrell ('20).

With a newfound resurgence of interest, many are beginning to question the abrupt end to the Oyster River High School's boys' volleyball team (1996-2012), and look into its potential re-formation.

ORHS health teacher Robert Quaglieri held the head coach position for nine years, from 1996 to 2004. Even before '96, he coached when it was a club team, not recognized by the state as a varsity team. "We were all pushing for it [to become a varsity sport], and they finally approved it," said Quaglieri. "At the time, we were one of the smaller schools in the program, going against larger schools like Pinkerton and Salem... the big boys."

Ned Clarke ('10) played for the team, and felt it offered a great outlet for guys looking for an additional sport. "We weren't the best in the state, but we worked very hard to be the best we could," he said.

2001 proved to be an exception. Finishing the season with a record of 12-6, the boys' team fared extremely well for a devel-

oping team at a small school. "I had those kids for four years," said Quaglieri, of his 2001 lineup. "They learned all the different positions, and they rotated well... that year, I had one senior and five juniors on the court."

So what caused its demise? Speculations remain, but a commonly agreed upon theory is that the unfavorable switch from the fall season to the spring was a cause for the drastic drop in numbers and interest. With a basketball player-heavy lineup, players prioritized spring Amature Athletic Union (AAU) club basketball over volleyball. Quaglieri offered a potential explanation for the sudden drop in numbers. "In the fall, we always had numbers; we could get people to play," he said. "When they moved it to the spring, a lot of those kids who used to get ready for basketball by playing volleyball were tied up with AAU."

Quaglieri has been asked whether he would have any interest in coaching again if a team were to be created. Having stepped down from the position to spend more time with his kids, he admits that he would be interested, but not for another four years. "I want to see my kids through high school," he said.

Coach or no coach, ORHS students are beginning to band



2012 Oyster River High School Boys' Volleyball Team



together in support of creating a new team, often spurred by exciting volleyball matches during Spirit Week. "The interest is there," said Morrell. "We have a lot of athletes from other sports who would be interested and able to make the transition over to volleyball."

Nicolas Cornejo ('19) expanded on Morrell's point, adding, "there is definitely interest at ORHS for a boys' volleyball team. It is a great sport for cross training, as it improves your reaction time. Plus, it is also an economically accessible sport."

However, it takes more than a handful of interested students to form a state-recognized team. "There are three things that you really have to think about before starting a program," said ORHS Athletic Director, Andrew Lathrop. "You need sustainability of interest, adherence to Title IX, as well as approval from the school board."

Although Oyster River Youth Association offers a co-ed volleyball team for children in grades 5-8, there is no feeder program directly affiliated with the high school. Without assurance of continued interest, the new program may have difficulty gaining traction.

"We would have to look at the numbers of those interested in the middle school, because that would feed the high school team," said Lathrop. "You want to make sure that when you start it up, it's something that will last for more than two years. We have to remember that it was once here, and it went away. Who's to say that won't happen again?"

Quaglieri reiterates this concern, adding, "we have to make sure it's going to have some longevity to it. We can't just bring it back for three years."

Lathrop's second condition was that the school adheres to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The purpose of the amendment is to ensure that "no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial as-

sistance." Title IX is often put into use when there is not equal opportunity for males and females in athletics. Currently, ORHS holds a relatively even percentage of male and female athletes, with two extra teams strictly for females: field hockey and volleyball. Lathrop believes that the addition of a boy's volleyball team would not break regulations, which requires the percentage of female and male athletes to be proportionate to females and males enrolled in the school.

If the interest is there, and it has been confirmed to abide by Title IX, Lathrop would approach the school board with a proposal, along with support from ORHS Principal Suzanne Filippone, ORCSD Superintendent Dr. James Morse, and ORCSD Assistant Superintendent Todd Allen.

When it comes to approaching the school board with a proposal for a new sport, there are three categories under which the sport can fall. It can be proposed as a club sport, meaning it is not an official NHIAA team, and is entirely self-funded. It can also be a partially self-funded NHIAA team. Currently at ORHS, the alpine ski team, the swimming and diving team, and the ice hockey teams all fall under the category of partially self-funded. With higher expenses than other sports due to facility use, these teams raise a portion of their own funds on their own. Thirdly, it could be a fully funded NHIAA varsity team.

If all the pieces fall into place, Lathrop is on board. "I am all about providing more opportunities for students to participate," he concluded. "If the community, the school board, and the school support it, then I support it too."

Moving forward, students and community members need to make the first move if the interest is there for a boys' volleyball team. Clarke remains hopeful that something will be done, as his experience on the team was a memorable one. "Learning how to work as a team and making the friends that I made were the best parts," he said. "I'm not sure whether the team will make a return, but I hope it does."

- Eleanor Zwart

Photos from ORHS Yearbook

# # ME TOO

Solidarity. When we unite in passionate agreement; when a group of people share an interest or responsibility. Most importantly, when we use this feeling, this sense of harmony, and take action.

Since the outbreak of allegations against Harvey Weinstein for sexual assault and harassment, sexual misconduct has become a worldwide discussion. Such allegations prompted many others to come forward and release information of any and all sexual misconduct they themselves had experienced. Powerful, formerly respectable people belonging to the entertainment industry such as Kevin Spacey, James Franco, and Ben Affleck have diminished and destroyed their own images, their own reputations, and the love of many of their fans as a result of their alleged sexual misconduct.

As someone who has a deep appreciation for both the arts and artists involved in the entertainment industry, it was shocking and heartbreaking for me to see so many idols in a much different light than the one I had perhaps imagined them in. To think that I have looked up to these people and admired their work my whole life makes me feel sick. Their behavior was disgusting. Without the courage of the victims who came forward, these people would still be getting away with it today.

Past and present politicians have also been included in the mix. Former President of the United States George H. W. Bush was accused of groping or touching women inappropriately. Former President of the United States Bill Clinton was accused of rape, groping, and violent assault, and current President of the United States Donald Trump has been accused of non-consensual kissing and groping as well as a rape claim. Of course, such allegations have not only been made against those in Hollywood or in the political world. Regrettably, heinous acts like these occur in everyday life.

According to *Victims of Sexual Violence: Statistics*, 1 out of every 6 American women has been the victim of assault and 1 out of every 10 rape victims are male. Taking a look at the bigger picture, consider this: every 98 seconds an American is sexually assaulted.

It is easy to look at all the information we have received thus far and feel hopeless, fearful, or sad. While it is impossible to forget these feelings at present, let us be inspired by the fact that people are finally taking a stand.

Immediately following the Harvey Weinstein incident, a

movement called Me Too has united men and women all over the world, encouraging them to speak out against any abuse they endured. This movement has taken shape through the use of social media as those who have experienced sexual harassment will post using the hashtag "#metoo". The aim of this is to give people a sense of the enormity of such an issue.

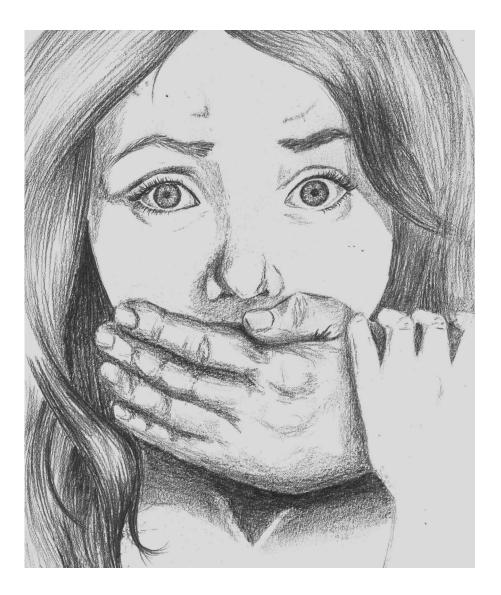
The Me Too movement has gained momentum everywhere inspiring organizations such as UNH's SHARPP (Sexual Harassment & Rape Prevention Program) to support and participate in movements like these. "It's about time," said SHARPP's Direct Services Coordinator Megan Berman. "I think that issues around sexual violence are silenced a lot and I think that people are afraid that others won't believe them. It's been a great thing to have come out. What it really says is that it happens everywhere and that it's prevalent in every community [and] every organization."

I felt encouraged after speaking with Berman. Although what she said had an unfortunate truth to it, that sexual assault really can happen anywhere, it was uplifting to realize that there is also an opportunity for support everywhere. As a teenager in Durham there is a certain comfort in knowing that there is always a place to turn to for help.

Sarah Mueller ('18), a victim of sexual assault who has participated in Me Too, speaks to its relevance. "I think [these movements are] important because it puts a name and face to the numbers. It helps people realize the severity of the problem, and the number of people close to them affected by it."

The Time's Up movement arose as a second step following on from "Me Too." Entering 2018, over 300 leading women in Hollywood established and signed off on "Time's Up." This movement is made up of many goals, one of which to combat sexual misconduct. The men and women involved have already taken action. For example, many celebrities wore black to the Golden Globes this year as a symbol of solidarity. More action is to be taken as we work towards this common goal. The people of this movement have already formed a legal team in the hopes of providing legal aid to those who have survived sexual harassment. They already have around \$13 million in donations.

It's refreshing to see more idols of mine interested in making a difference. Considering that these women are looked up to by many in society, they have a very important voice in the



matter. I was glad to see that it was women of the entertainment industry who decided to create change. I think it's necessary that they set a good example at a time when the rest of their field is being represented poorly.

"I think people are taking it more seriously now than ever before," said Meredith Freeman-Caple, ORHS's drama department teacher. Caple considers it important for everyone to support both movements by saying: "Even if you haven't been sexually abused—so you're not a "Me Too" person—you can be a "Time's Up" person for other people."

Henry Bulkley ('18) agreed by saying, "I think movements like these are absolutely vital to keep the public eye open [to the fact that] this stuff happens to not just anybody, but also friends, family and peers."

Mueller also touches on the importance of these movements by speaking to those who are unaware of what's going on right now. "To those who are unaware, I would say, just watch a little closer. It can be a co-worker being uneasy around another one, or it can be a friend sidestepping another "friend" to avoid contact. You know someone who has been

sexually assaulted or harassed. You just might not [realize] it." Mueller's words left a powerful impact on me as she ended her thought. "Just because you don't know about it, doesn't mean it doesn't happen."

As a young, female, high school student, it was important that I opened my eyes to the issues going on around me. At first I almost couldn't help feeling like I had been betrayed by society, wondering why the world was all of a sudden losing its mind, but in actuality sexual assault and harassment have always been around. I can safely say that after having done my research I feel more confident that if we work together we can fight this. All the same, that is not to say that I think of the future and what it will bring without doubt or fear in my mind. Tomorrow is unknown, so the best time to take a stand is today.

"What I have to say to others," Mueller concludes with a message to those still suffering, "If something has happened to you, no matter who you are, no matter what happened, talk to someone. Get help. The worst thing you can do is keep it in."

-Hannah Croasdale
Artwork by Abby Croot

# Living It Out

A few weeks ago, I decided to make a change in my life. Following up on my article in Issue 2 about Zero Waste Living, I realized it's one thing to research and promote alternatives to a wasteful, trash-filled life, and another thing to actually commit and make a change. Whether it's going all out and revamping everything, or just tweaking how you shop, there is room for everyone to live waste free.

I loved the opportunity to talk with Samantha White, a Waste Free blogger, about how she approaches zero waste living. She opened a door for me to then pursue a waste free life myself. Throughout this eye-opening experience, I have learned about recycling, shared my experiences with others, reduced the amount of trash I produce, and most importantly, discovered why knowing the amount of trash you produce is so important.

Starting out, I needed to make some ground rules and so to keep myself in check I started a journal. My first rule of thumb was to start out slow and examine what trash I made on a regular basis; after all, you can't reduce something you don't know you make. My second step was to cut out as much unnecessary trash as possible.

The first day, I was terrified. I looked around in my kitchen and saw that almost everything in my fridge was in plastic containers. I took a peek in my bathroom and saw that almost every product like toothpaste, makeup, and face wash came in a wasteful package. I realize now that I took on way too much at the beginning. I wanted to dive right in. I didn't want to take small steps. Like my mom says, "don't try to eat the whole elephant at once. Take little bites." I have no idea where that came from, but I felt like it was good advice in the moment. In order to better educate myself and take smaller bites, I decided to research more about waste free.

The definition of waste free living is a lifestyle that attempts to stop the production of wasteful products and then repurposes and reuses what cannot be prevented. These two major steps reduce the amount of trash that you personally send to the landfill. For someone who a) doesn't know a lot about recycling and composting and b) is just starting out, I figured it's good to have the basics.

One of my biggest discoveries was finding that glass is recyclable, which explains why so many zero wasters love to use mason jars. While looking at the Waste Management website, I also discovered that you can recycle aluminum foil. Maybe that was just me being an ignorant, trash producing loser, but I was pretty proud of myself for discovering that. What's more interesting is I'm not alone in that. The article from Waste Management, titled "What Can I Recycle", says that Americans are "far more likely to recycle aluminum soda cans than aluminum foil." The overarching recycling rule to remember is that all recyclables must be clean before they are disposed of. Believe it or not, an extremely greasy pizza box can actually ruin a whole batch of recycling, according to the Waste Management website, so you should never try to recycle a recyclable item with food on it.

But zero waste is more than putting your garbage in the right location, although that is an important aspect. It's also about stopping the trash from even coming into play. One thing I've been

## My attempt to go waste free



researching a lot about was if you can recycle plastic bags. I knew that you couldn't in the curbside pick up, but there are certain locations that you can dispose of your plastic grocery bags, and plastic wrap. But isn't not making that trash in the first place a much better alternative? In those first few days, I learned pretty quickly that my biggest culprit came from how my food came packaged, and then how I repackaged it. For example, most bags of tortilla chips come in a plastic package and then for a packaged lunch we will remove chips from the plastic bag to put into another plastic bag for ease of transportation. It blows my mind sometimes how I failed to see the harm in my actions. Looking back after having been doing this for almost a month now, I am relieved to have found alternatives.

A look at Pinterest and a few waste free sites quickly revealed that mason jars were sweeping the zero waste nation and I had the overwhelming desire to join the movement. I consider myself to be a minimalist-ish. It's not that I don't have a lot of stuff because I'm sure my room is filled full of junk I haven't used in years, but to buy more of something when I already have perfectly good alternatives at my house feels strange. Maybe the word I'm looking for is resourceful, but regardless, I wanted to see what I had in my house that could replace the plastic baggies and I discovered plastic ziploc containers. Now I'm sure you're thinking, "Jordan, I thought we established that plastic isn't good. Why aren't you using something that is easier on the environment?" which is a completely reasonable question. In an ideal world, my whole family would switch to glass products and stop using wasteful, plastic packages, but alas, here I am in a world filled with plastic. I believe that not using the containers we already have at our disposal is more wasteful than buying new mason jars (as cute as they are), which is a great rule of thumb for anyone starting out. Other

alternatives I've found to be helpful are metal or bamboo utensils over single-use plastic cutlery, cloth napkins over paper towels, and reusable or cloth grocery bags over the plastic ones. There is importance in recognizing simple changes, because the changes that seem the easiest can often lead to the biggest differences.

After a few days of measuring my progress, I decided to go all in. My original goal was to go to the bare minimum I could, but a trip to the grocery store soon changed my mind. From the moment I walked in the store, I was overwhelmed. The entrance to Hannaford's was filled with premade items, like breads, sweets, and sandwiches - every item wrapped in plastic. I walked to the back part of the store, clinging to the salsa aisle, which seemed to be the only section filled with glass containers. After a few deep breaths, I found the section for which I had been searching: the bulk bins, the unsung hero of shoppers everywhere. Buying from the bulk bins has many benefits. One reason buying in bulk is appealing to me is you can buy exactly how much you want, so you're not buying too much of something you don't need. An article from Mother Nature Network, called "The Many Benefits of Buying Bulk Foods", adds saving money and helping the environment as two additional bonuses. Even if you're not convinced that bulk bins are the way to shop, give it a try. You never know what you might discover.

While I'm on the different-ways-of-shopping train, zero waste living will push you to shop locally. Farmers markets take place weekly in the summer and are a great way to connect with local farmers. Bring an airtight stainless steel container to a butcher's shop as opposed to buying prepackaged meat, which often comes in styrofoam packaging. I might be speaking hypocritically here, seeing as I have never been to a local butcher's shop, however I hope to change that in the near future.

Another way to shop both locally and waste free is at a bakery. Not only will the bread be fresh and delicious, but you can also choose how to package them. I read an article from Trash Is For Tossers titled "Why Going Zero Waste Checks Off All Of Your Resolutions" and I've found that zero waste has helped me achieve other goals in the process. I am eating more whole fruits and





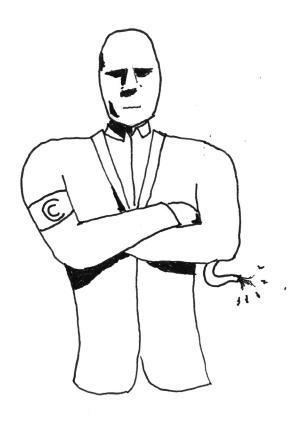
vegetables, planning my lunches so I avoid the 7am scramble to eat healthily and still get out the door in time, and enjoying the process. My favorite aspect of these past few weeks has been talking openly about why I bring containers wherever I go, and why I've refuse certain items. For example, a few of my friends and I went out for a 'Galentine's Day' trip to the cookie dough store in the mall. I was a little uncomfortable to bring my small mason jar into the building as an alternative to the provided disposable cups, but with a little help from my friends, I decided to embrace it. I had the opportunity to explain to both my friends and the people working at the store why I asked for this strange request and was able to show the importance that it had to me.

There is completely room for me to grow and I don't plan on stopping any time soon. I totally have had my bad days. I woke up late and didn't plan the night before so I ended up having to throw a plastic lined granola bar in my lunch box and it made me question if I'm setting a good example for the zero waste community. I went to the mall and forgot to bring a bag to put my purchases in. I space on asking the waiter not to bring me a straw. It happens. We're human. But on the days when I thoughtfully packaged my meals in mason jars and fill up on fruits and vegetables, I am proud of the decision I've made. Every day is a new challenge and I get excited for all the ways I can continue to pursue my goal of living waste free.

Whether it's learning about recycling, buying a composter, refusing plastic bags, or shopping smart, there is something for everyone in the zero waste community. A zero waste life isn't about one big choice - it's thousands of little ones.

- Jordan Zercher Art by Ronnie R

# - IT'S TIMETO TAKE BACK OUR INTERNET



The internet was rocked in December 2017 when a long fought battle drew to a close. Net neutrality had been repealed.

The decision, made by the Federal Communications Commission, removed a number of consumer protections that had been put in place by the Obama administration. According to the New York Times article, "Why Net Neutrality Was Repealed and How It Affects You," the rules prevented internet service providers, or ISPs, from censoring or slowing down content from specific sources. The protections also prohibited ISPs from creating "internet fast lanes" for those who pay premium prices, while slowing down internet of normal users.

The decision was a massive move towards deregulation that threatens both our wallets and the core of an open internet.

A number of existing issues are exacerbated by the repeal. The right to a free and open internet is a concept that has gained popularity in the past decade. As our society becomes increasingly internet dependent, it becomes harder to exist without a connection. The internet is undoubtedly the platform for communication and democracy. Indeed, the world's more repressive countries, like Turkey and China, heavily restrict internet usage and access. This access must be protected at all costs, and while many view this deregulation as a path to greater freedom, it really gives the power of censorship and manipulation to private companies.

"While many view this deregulation as a path to greater freedom, it really gives the power of censorship and manipulation to private companies."

The powers afforded to ISPs by Net Neutrality's repeal become much more threatening when one understands the power these companies already wield in our everyday lives. According to broadbandnow.com, the vast majority of people in the ORCSD have access to only two internet service providers—Comcast (Xfinity) and DSL. While there are a number of major internet service providers, many have regional monopolies. This effectively eliminates competition between ISPs, as it is usually too expensive for more companies to come into a region and build brand new infrastructure.

With our lack of options, the Net Neutrality decision becomes even more dangerous. We will find it extremely difficult to switch providers, even if they are throttling connections or charging premiums for services like music and video streaming.

So what do we do? According to the Wired article, "States and Cities Keep the Battle for Net Neutrality Alive," a number of states have begun to take their own

# "Residents could access high speed internet without worry of their data being monitored or throttled."

legislative action to ensure Net Neutrality's enforcement within their own borders. The governor of Montana, too, has issued an executive order that would punish ISPs that do not follow Net Neutrality. State legislation could work in New Hampshire, but this fails to address the existing issues with regional monopolies and subparinternet speeds.

If the system is broken, why don't we make our own? A movement has been growing in the past few years. People fed up with slow speeds, poor customer service, and high costs have organized their towns to create their own solution. Municipal broadband is a system in which the town or city takes on the role of the ISP. These systems move to make internet faster, more accessible, and cheaper. While the systems are paid for by the taxpayer, they are typically cheap or even free of additional cost.

If Durham got its own broadband system, residents could access high speed internet without worry of their data being monitored or throttled. The system would be a public utility, created to serve the people, not profit off of them.

The beauty of our own network is that we can use next-gen fiber technology. By building a new network of fiber optic cable directly to each house, internet speeds would soar. According to the Institute for Local Self Reliance, "community fiber networks around the country offer the fastest speeds at prices similar or below the prices we are currently paying for slower speeds. These faster speeds and affordable prices can be a lifeline for smaller businesses."

This transition would not be without obstacles. New infrastructure is expensive, even if it pays off. Many municipalities, such as Fort Collins, Colorado, issue bonds to help support the initial building costs of their networks. Luckily, our town is well funded and significantly smaller than a city such as Fort Collins. Last year, NH state legislature attempted to pass Senate Bill 170. This bipartisan bill would have removed an NH provision that impedes towns' bonding for things like municipal internet. Unfortunately, the bill was voted down.

Another obstacle has arisen in many towns that push for municipal broadband. In Fort Collins, their ISP, Comcast, spent over \$900,000 on advertisements attempting to prevent their vote in support of municipal broadband. The people of Fort Collins prevailed, but it was a clear example of how far ISPs will go to maintain their hold on power.

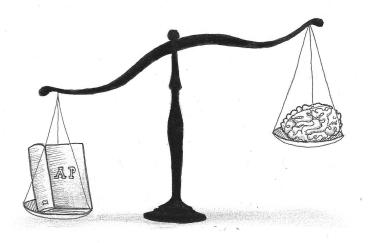
Even if the battle to regain Net Neutrality fails, our community can be protected by public internet. We have to show up in town meetings and comment sessions to voice support for municipal broadband. At the same time, we must call our local representatives to revisit SB 170, as it is the first step towards financing public internet. We can have a system that is truly ours, run by people we know and trust. This system is key to protecting our democracy and forging our own path, one not determined by private interests and outdated infrastructure.

-Nicholas Dundorf



# **CREDIT**

## OR



My junior year at Oyster River High School, I was enrolled in level four Spanish and had already completed the two year requirement of world language necessary to graduate. With dreams of traveling and studying abroad, I, like many of my classmates, decided to continue my studies. I was then faced with another question: AP or level five?

I remember looking at the two options and being confused about the difference between them. I asked around a little more and the general answer was something like, "I'm not really sure. I think they're similar, just AP can get you college credit." With college in my future plans, I thought that the right choice was clearly AP. I was wrong.

AP Spanish has been different than any previous Spanish class I have taken at ORHS. It is not the teacher. I had and enjoyed Mr. Hausmann twice prior to enrolling in AP Spanish. It is simply the curriculum of the class. The goal of an AP language class is not to boost your confidence speaking, teach you new vocab, or prepare you for traveling abroad. Its sole purpose is to prepare you for the AP test.

Both the AP Spanish and French exams consist of 65 multiple choice questions, an email response, a persuasive essay, a conversation with an automated person, and a spoken cultural comparison. It is scored on 1-5 scale, with 5 being the highest score a student can receive. Many colleges will accept an AP course as a credit, as long as the student earns a 3 or higher on the test. In 2018, the cost of the test is \$96. However, this is a small fee compared to the cost of a college course.

In order to prepare for the exam, students do

activities to practice the skills they will be tested on most days in their AP class. "We write a lot of essays, which is good, but if I go to Spain, no one wants to read an essay, they want to hear me speak," explained Ben Harriton ('18), who is enrolled in AP Spanish but wishes he were in level 5. The AP curriculum does not include all the skills necessary to become proficient in a language, and provides little wiggle room for teachers to include other topics.

Barbara Milliken has been teaching French at the high school for 27 years. After Stephen Lord retired last year in 2017, Milliken took over the role of the AP teacher. This did not last long however, as four weeks into the 2018 school year, the AP French class took a vote and changed to French 5.

"[AP French] was stressful. It prevented me from being able to take risks in what I was doing and just in general prevented me from doing what I wanted to do," said Ben Antognetti ('18), a student in the class.

"It prevented me from being able to take risks in what I was doing and just in general prevented me from doing what I wanted to do."

"Their priority was to enjoy the language and not practice for the test," explained Milliken, who was also pleased with the switch. "AP French has a much more prescribed curriculum to prepare kids in a certain time

# KNOWLEDGE?

"I don't think the class is

preparing me for the real

world. It's more preparing

me for the test."

frame to get ready for the AP test. [In French 5], I have a lot more leeway to pick the curriculum."

After observing what the AP French class did, the AP Spanish class tried to follow suit. However, the vote did not pass, and the students opted to continue to study AP Spanish in hopes of receiving a college credit. This disappointed many students enrolled in the class who felt they were not learning practical Spanish.

"It is not helping me speak Spanish better, it is just helping me with the exam," expressed Shivika Aggarwal ('18.)

As the year continued, this became the general consensus around the AP Spanish classroom. AP language is the right choice for students who care more about college credit and the appearance of their transcript than how much they improve their skills. The issue is, for many students, these are hard things to decline. There is pressure for students to take the AP course rather than

level 5 because AP is seen as more advanced, therefore looking better on transcripts, and there is possible college credit on the line. However, while one may help you save money on a college course and look better on the Common App, the other one is actually more beneficial. I believe AP

language should not be offered so that students do not have to face the dilemma of whether they want college credit and to look good on paper or to actually improve their foreign language skills. The answer should be clear: take the class in which you will learn and improve more.

Students are not sufficiently taught the difference between AP and level 5 language in February, when they need to sign up for classes. Whichever class more students sign up for, the school will offer. There usually are not enough students interested to offer both.

"I didn't know what I was getting myself into. At first I thought it was a good idea [to take AP Spanish] because if you're taking a hard Spanish course, why not have the possibility to get credit for it? But I didn't really know what the class would be like. I wanted to continue learning Spanish, but all we do is prepare for a test the whole year," said Aggarwal.

"It was a shock and it took a lot of strength to not

drop the class in the first week," agreed Harriton, who was disappointed when he realized AP Spanish was not like the previous years of Spanish he had taken. "I don't think the class is preparing me for the real world. It's more preparing me for the test," stated Harriton.

Tom Hausmann, who teaches AP Spanish, acknowledges that it is important for students to understand the difference between the two. "If the group is right for five, five is a great class. If the group is right for AP, AP is a great class," he explained. When students who want to be in level five are stuck in AP, or vice versa, things get messy. "There are years when AP runs and people who wanted to do 5 are upset and there are years when 5 runs and people that wanted to do AP are upset," said Hausmann. He added, "if the students are happy to be there, it's a much better environment."

If you are debating whether to take an AP or level 5 language course, put some serious thought towards what

you hope to get out of the class. I enrolled in AP Spanish with the knowledge that I probably would not continue to study Spanish after high school. I had hoped that AP Spanish would allow me to get on a high enough level that traveling abroad would not pose an intimidating task.

Yet, as the year comes to an end, I sit in class wondering how the skills I have learned all year will help me. My depressing realization: they probably won't.

Nevertheless, I do not regret taking the class. My skills may not have improved to the point where I would like them to be, but I have not lost many skills. The class allows me to practice my Spanish every day, something I surely would not of done had I dropped the class. I feel confident that I will be able to earn college credit, but I did not realize this was the main goal of the class. The bottom line is that AP language classes are not meant to teach you much new information. They are not meant to boost your confidence speaking. They are not meant to be a fun and relaxed atmosphere. AP language classes are meant to teach you how to take the AP test, a skill that is fairly useless after the test. Sure, you might get some college credit. But what is more valuable to you? Credit or knowledge?

-Lydia Hoffman Artwork by Emma Kovalcik

# Bring Back Follies!



As I walk through the senior core, I feel a clear divide. Social groups stand in clusters, reluctant to intermingle with anyone outside their inner circle. We've all shared the same experience of attending Oyster River High School for the past four years, we should be able to relate well to each other. As the number of days until graduation are dwindling, so are the opportunities for unity amongst the senior class. In order to bring everyone together one last time, it's time to bring back a classic Oyster River tradition that will end our high school experience on a high note.

For many years, Oyster River students put on a show at the end of their high school career called the Senior Follies. This was a collection of live and pre-recorded skits written and performed by seniors which poked fun at staff members, current fads, and their experiences in high school. The intent of Follies was never to make anyone feel bad, but over the years that is what it became.

Due to its often crass and sexual content, Follies has not been put on for almost five years. While senior classes since have pushed hard to make Follies happen, the administration never deemed any of the proposed material appropriate for a school sponsored event. Class president Bella Saputo ('16) campaigned hard for Follies to take place during her senior year, meeting with administration on a regular basis to get skit ideas approved. "The administration had a lot of concerns about inappropriate content," she said. "The seniors involved felt that if they couldn't include the content they wanted, then the event itself was not worth it."

ORHS Dean of Faculty, Mark Milliken, says that the event is too risky to put on, due to the school being held responsible for any tasteless or offensive content. "It's hard to be funny while also being school appropriate," he said. While I understand the administration's concerns, I feel that they are undermining the work ethic and determination that Oyster River students have. If Follies is to happen, I want it to be something that the whole school is proud of. If they want us to make Follies a school appropriate event, we are more than capable of putting in the hard work that is necessary to accomplish that.

"I think a big misconception regarding Follies is that the skits are meant to be hurtful," said Jake Kaplan ('18). "If we were to imitate someone such as a teacher, it would be a teacher we all really liked."

No one wants to be remembered as part of the class that made staff and teachers feel insulted. The intent of Follies is for a senior class to leave their last mark on the school before graduation, and it certainly shouldn't be a negative one. One thing I've loved about my time at Oyster River is the relationships that I've developed with my teachers. I feel that many staff members and students are able to joke around with each other in a light hearted manner. The purpose of Follies is to make people laugh, and lots of humor stems from a place of respect and admiration. There's no point in making fun of someone who isn't able to appreciate it, which is why the goal is that no one would be offended by Follies if it were to take place this year.

Students aren't the only ones who see benefits to senior Follies. Senior class advisor, Heather Healy, has overseen many successful Follies in the past. "It's a huge team effort and a lot of hard work, so when students see their final product, I think they're really proud," she said. Healy also noted the fundraising benefits of Follies, stating that it's brought in a great amount of money for senior classes in the past. This money could go towards the class gift that is presented each year at graduation, or could even be donated to a local scholarship.

It's been a long four years filled with a lot of hard work. Frankly, as a second semester senior, I'm ready to have some fun and enjoy my last few months of high school. My best memories at Oyster River have been the inside jokes I've shared with my friends, and the times that a teacher made the class laugh so hard we had to stop the lesson briefly. I've been so fortunate to attend a school where people value humor as much as I do. To solidify the class of 2018's high school career, let us return the favor of laughter to the Oyster River community.

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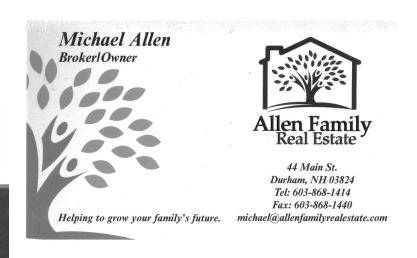


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